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MODERN HOMES

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MODERN HOMES

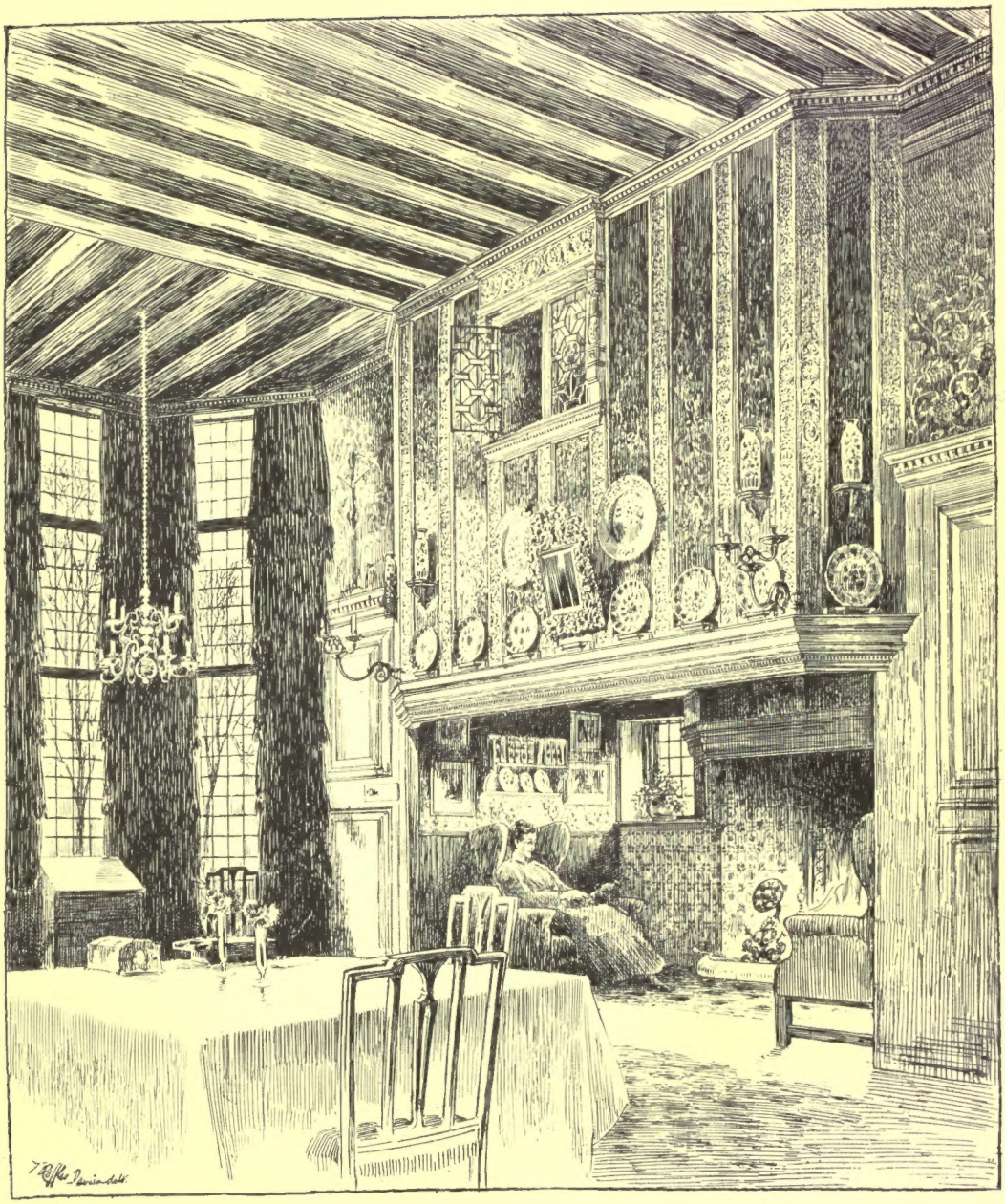

FIG. I. A TOWN HOUSE DINING ROOM: R. NORMAN SHAW, R.A., ARCHITECT [FRONTISPIECE

MODERN HOMES

SELECTED EXAMPLES OF DWELLING HOUSES

DESCRIBED AND ILLUSTRATED BY

T. RAFFLES DAVISON

HON. A.R.I.B.A.

WITH A FOREWORD BY

SIR ASTON WEBB, R.A.

LONDON

GEORGE BELL AND SONS

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FOREWORD

A BOOK on "Modern Homes" by Mr. Raffles Davison must surely prove attractive to all who care for the present-day progress of domestic architecture as well as to those who care for the truthful and dainty representation of it. No one can have seen more Modern Homes than Mr. Davison, and no one certainly knows better than he how to choose and present them to us. His architectural knowledge ensures that the architecture is represented in such a manner as to satisfy the architect, while the artist in him ensures that this shall not be emphasized at the expense of the general effect of his drawings. Here we have selected, by one who knows, some of the best and most representative Modern Homes. Views of their exteriors and interiors, staircases, chimney corners, halls, and furniture are given, often accompanied by plans just sufficient to place them in their surroundings, with very often a sketch or two in the garden and sometimes a photograph. The drawings are accompanied by just enough letterpress to draw attention to the strong points of each design with an entire absence of any wearisome technical detail which would be out of place in such a work.

In this work we have represented to us in the happiest manner the homely, simple, and cosy—The Orchard, Chorley Wood; the stately traditional and interesting—Little Thakeham; picturesque Littleshaw nestling in the hillside; Amesbury House, an ideal town mansion in Kensington; comfortable looking Hemingford; the little White Cottage, Harrow, and many others.

To all who contemplate entering on the delights of house building or to those who enjoy the quieter and less expensive pleasure of following the results of others' experiments, this little book will afford much information and enjoyment, both pictorially and architecturally, and it certainly does much credit to its author.

ASTON WEBB.

March, 1909.

PREFACE

A few words should be said by way of preface to this book. Though so much has been done in the way of illustration of Modern Homes, no excuse is needed for the production of a series of typical homes, executed in recent years, which have come under the writer's personal observation and which show some of the best efforts of the ablest modern architects. The aim has been to give truthful records of what has been actually done and no merely fanciful pictures, and almost without exception every house has been studied and described after completion. The architects who have designed them would be the last to claim that they are perfect or that they do not present many points for possible improvement, but it may be claimed that they are all the result of genuine artistic effort. None of the designers can maintain that they would have been possible without the study and observation of modern design as well as of old types, and therefore these examples are published with some confidence that they will influence and guide others towards the attainment of a higher ideal. It is quite obvious that to cover the whole range of Modern Homes in size and cost would be impossible in a moderate sized book, and those chiefly illustrated are of the simpler sort of homes such as are likely to prove interesting to people of moderate means.

In looking over what I have written in this book I feel that I must ask the indulgence of the reader if the words appear to convey a dogmatism in matters of taste which I should strongly deprecate. Everything here set down represents an

individual expression of feeling resulting from a long study of domestic art, and is primarily intended to stimulate an interest in the subject by those who have not made a profession of it.

I have to acknowledge the courtesy of the Editor of "The Idler" in permitting me to use much material which appeared in serial form in that magazine, and I am also indebted to Messrs. Cassell and Co. for the use of some illustrations from a series of articles on architecture written by me for the "Magazine of Art."

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PART I

OF HOUSE DESIGN

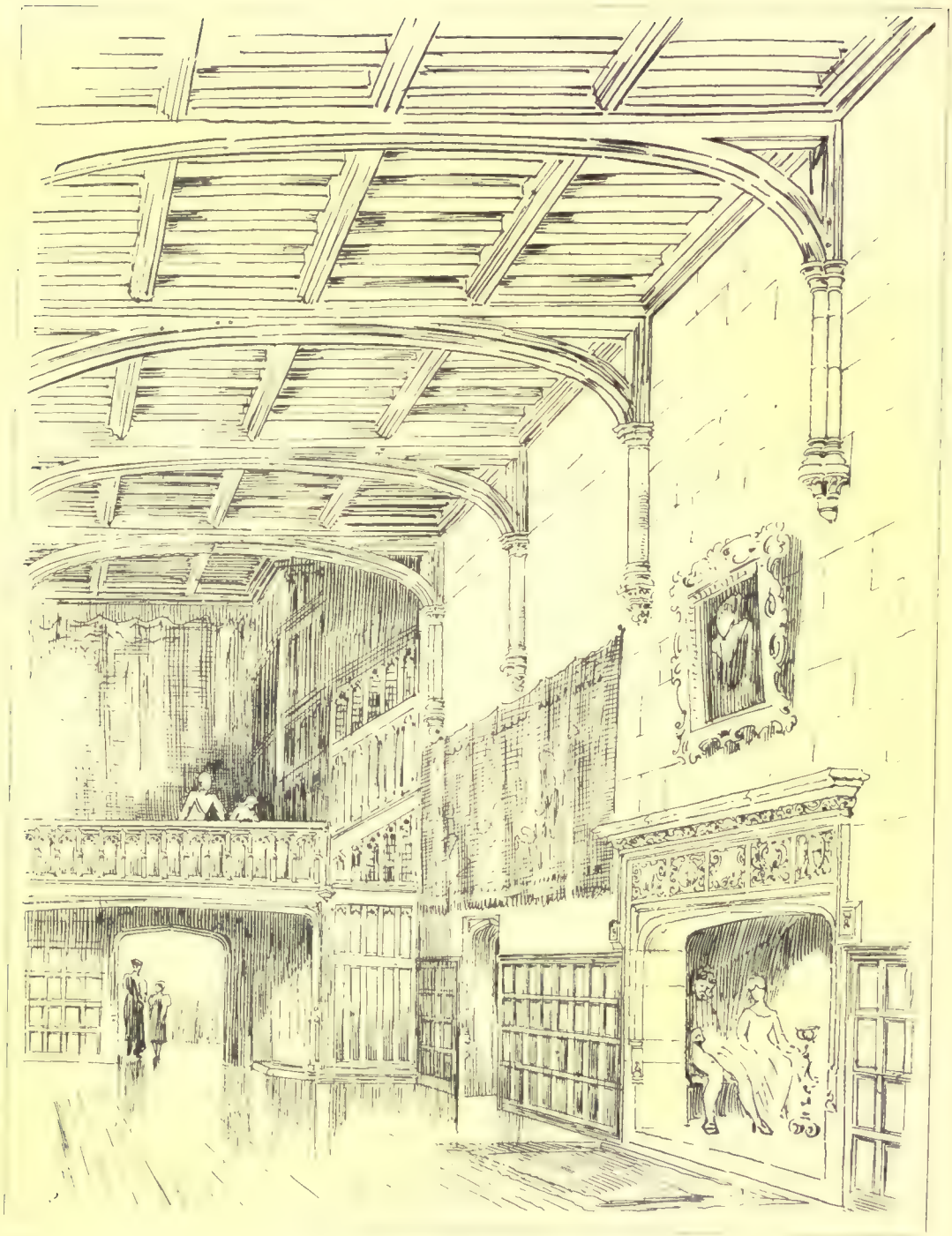


FIG. 2. BATSFORD: ERNEST GEORGE, ARCHITECT

MODERN HOMES

I. SOME POINTS IN HOUSE DESIGN

THE chief purpose of this book is to show that houses may be designed with individual artistic character whatever their size and cost. Even the smallest detached house,—that which, in fact, is practically the size of a workman's cottage,—may be well proportioned and also interesting in detail and expression; whilst the most costly building may quite well preserve an element of simplicity and breadth of design underlying effects of much richness and elaboration. It is too often forgotten that the qualities which go to make a building look home-like are needed in all kinds of houses, and may even find expression in very large buildings. But in all degrees of houses one should look for a suitability of expression both for the purpose and use of the individual owner, and also for the locality in which it is erected.

There are so many points of view from which to regard house-building that one is tempted, on the one hand, to be too discursive, or, on the other hand, to say too little. But it is hardly possible to insist too much on the importance of considering a house in relation to its environment as well as its adaptation to the particular piece of ground on which it stands. A house may be on a level ground with hills all about it, or, on the contrary, built on ground of great variety of level amidst level scenery, and the same kind of house will hardly look its best in either place.

To many of my readers the sites of German castles or Italian monasteries are familiar, and they will realize how perfectly their treatment appears adapted to their sites. Familiar examples will occur to the reader of the magnificent sites on which such buildings are so placed and designed that they hold some appearance of dignity and impressiveness even amidst the magnificence of their surroundings.

One of the commonest and gravest mistakes of the builder is to create a sky-line to his building which so challenges comparison with the large aspects of natural objects as to bring ridicule on its display of puny features. In a sequestered grove or a sheltered nook picturesque features may often almost run riot without producing a ridiculous or bizarre effect, and much picturesqueness is allowable where it does not detract from the general effect of good outline. The high roof of a French château forms so big and fine a background that much elaboration of tourelles and dormers may not detract from the substantially fine effect of the whole. I have seen a house by a clever architect which was full of all sorts of delightful detail when one got to it, but which at a distance had no value of mass or form in its relation to its surroundings, and this surely is to lose the first important effect which may be obtained in a building. It is even wise sometimes so to place and screen a certain kind of building that it shall not challenge comparison with large stretches of natural scenery, but shall have a close environment of bank, or hill, or trees, to form a comfortable and appropriate setting.

It would not be within the scope of this book to suggest methods of treatment for all sorts of available sites, any more than it is to specify the details and methods of equipment of the various parts of a house. The chief object is to encourage the practice of trained architects and the recognition by the public of their ability by aiding the latter to know what to expect and demand from them, and we safely affirm that the study of executed examples of house building is the best available way to advance in the understanding of what is good and bad. Even a trained designer of many years' experience will often be surprised at the quality of effect which may be found in a house which he hardly suspected from the plan. The mere facts of length and width in plan are of themselves only a partial guide, for it is in the particular treatment of these dimensions as to height and roof covering that we understand the final quality which will result from the plan form. The position of windows and doors, the effect of lighting, the kind of wall covering, the treatment of ceiling or of roof, are all things in which great differences may be made in the varying results from the very same plan. A house may look larger or smaller according to the wall and ceiling treatment as well as the style of furniture and

method of its distribution. Though in a large house given up to frequent entertainment of visitors a certain rigidity and even stateliness of effect may be arrived at and required there can be no doubt that in the average English home the owner chiefly desires an appearance of homeliness and comfort. And this is a matter which, it must be noted, is dependent on the materials used no less than their form and distribution. I remember a house—not a large one—in which the dining-room was furnished entirely in old oak Jacobean furniture, and the drawing-room entirely in luxuriously upholstered chairs and couches with no sign of wood construction or formality anywhere. The chief characteristic of one room might be styled its cleanly and non-absorbent quality and of the other its comfort, and one feels that in this general aspect the qualities of drawing-room and dining-room are primarily to be considered. Warmth of tone and colour in a dining-room, lightness and coolness in a drawing-room, and quiet sober tones in a library may be desired by a client or suggested by an architect, but such considerations are always relative to other matters and are not to be settled by any fixed rules. The pleasantest drawing-room I have ever used looks out at one end due north and on one side due east: it has no other windows, and it is cool in summer and warm in winter. But this exception to the generally accepted rules was caused by the site, and has been found to answer admirably.

One of the chief difficulties as to a good plan is the staircase, and I verily believe it is this fact which very often frightens an architect into spoiling his plan by the way this is placed. A client once very pertinently suggested to me that he thought it would be better if the architect forgot all about the staircase till the last moment and then fitted it in where it would come best. He was no doubt right to this extent, that the size, form, and disposition of the entertaining rooms should be laid down as the first desiderata and then the staircase applied to the scheme with as little disturbance as possible. It will also be found that if the staircase were more often treated as an enclosed and separate apartment there would be a gain to the general comfort of the plan. It is obvious to the reader that I am not now speaking of the reception or show staircase, which is of the greatest value in a big house on occasion of entertainment. I have known of a

grand reception in a great house where through want of stairs for the ascending and descending progress of the guests there was such a crush that the distinguished guest of the evening only reached the top of the staircase by the time he had to leave. A staircase of this kind is, of course, partly a lounge, and must be treated accordingly, and there must necessarily be degrees of staircases between the large and the small. But in the main it is perhaps wise in all moderate sized and small houses to minimize the intrusion of the staircase into the general plan of a house. It is well to treat it as a separate feature, a tower or projection of some sort, and in small houses it may often be combined with the conveniences as an offset from the plan. An example of this treatment is shown in Netherheys, illustrated in this book.

Take an unambitious country house of moderate size: what are the characteristics which make up the sum of our pleasure in the final result? First we note, of course, the general mass of the building. And here it is always gratifying to the eye to note a dominating feature to the whole group—it may be a high gable, a hipped roof, or a tall chimney stack, or it may even be the long line of the main roof itself which forms a dominating feature. By dominating I do not necessarily mean a single outstanding feature. But it is never very pleasing to see two or three diverging wings and distributed chimney stacks which do not form a good dominating line of any kind, and it is not always satisfactory to see the dominating point at one end of the composition only, though even this may be sometimes quite satisfactory. After the general form it is good to find some item of distinction or emphasis which gives interest to the composition from any one point, and on which contemplation is centred. This might be a long range of mullioned windows between two projecting wings, or it might be a porch or a turret, a chimney stack or a length of half-timber work.

After this matter of distinction or emphasis of parts we are always attracted by an inviting looking entrance suggestive of shelter and hospitality, an entrance easily accessible and just sufficiently emphatic for the size and character of the house.

Then one likes to note that the exterior generally is expressive of the plan and purpose of the various parts. And any naturally developed bit of quaintness or picturesque result is always interesting, but only so far as it is in proportion to its ease and naturalness.

It will be observed that the formality and symmetry of the Georgian type of house is much more difficult to assimilate with the freedom of planning and easy naturalness of our best type of genuine old English houses. These latter may have symmetry and even a certain amount of formality, whilst still yielding to all the exigences of a varied plan design, with rooms of varying proportion, and that is why one cannot but think it unfortunate that after the Jacobean there came a break in tradition which finally resulted in the dreadful revivals of the nineteenth century, equally lacking in the Classic or Gothic or Queen Anne methods. However, that break in tradition came, and it has now been for some time apparent that many of our better architects have been trying to get back to it. Some of this effort has been directed towards the result by means of a revival of arts and craftsmanship, though, unfortunately, the excellent craftsmanship attained has not been accompanied by an equal sincerity of design. If those who can "Craft!" and who spend their lives on it could also be brought to some genuine effort of good design as well, we might well hope for progress. But the design which is worth anything is usually done by the better educated and socially superior director or leader, and seldom or never comes from the workman himself.

If a client could more thoroughly realize what he wants before indulging in house building there would not only be a greater number of successes from the client's point of view, but also more chance of individual success for the architects. Moreover, houses can only be fairly judged as to their success from the way in which they have met their owners' wants. A recent house I know has been the subject of constantly unfair criticism because it was designed expressly to meet the views of the owner. It is not a large house, but large enough to suggest to the average householder the appropriateness of a big drawing-room. As a matter of fact, the drawing-room in this case is really a sort of boudoir—quite a small room. But the owner wanted one large room to hold a billiard table, and the room in effect answers to a formerly accepted idea of a drawing-room, for it has an ample ingle-nook, and though it contains a billiard table it is not really a billiard-room primarily, but only in a secondary capacity. The criticism that the drawing-room is too small for the size of the house is therefore quite unfair and beside the mark, and yet it is constantly quoted as against the success of the house!

There are, I venture to think, few who, being about to build a house for themselves, would not realize better what they do or do not want after a perusal of the following pages or of some similar publication. There are, unfortunately, so many reasons why one cannot give the exact cost of the houses illustrated, that in this matter of outlay no definite guidance can be offered. The cheapest house I ever heard of with any quality of design and detail is one in the eastern counties. It has a good large entrance vestibule approached by a long roofed alley from the road, which makes a delightful feature. The drawing-room is some thirty feet in length and has a charming bit of ornamental plaster-work in an oriel bay. The dining-room is of good size. The floors of both these rooms are in oak. There are six bedrooms, and the whole place is substantially and well built at a cost of £900. This would seem incredible and impossible in certain parts of the country. But it must be born in mind that in some cases like this the builder has lost money on the transaction, and though I have heard gentlemen express some satisfaction with such a result, it is not one which would give me pleasure! One should expect to allow for the builder getting a reasonable profit, and if there is not a prospect of this one cannot be surprised at scamped work. But the way to economize is to build on an economical plan, and eschew ornament or effect which does not arise simply and naturally.

If we are going to build for ourselves a house which we shall have to maintain for years in good order we must not indulge in false economies, nor in features like picturesque wooden barge boards, and much exterior painted woodwork. Many a house owner could reckon up a fine little bill against himself in a painted entrance door which would have been cheaper beyond all comparison if made in oak at first. So with good metal casements as against wooden ones. There is probably only one perfect preventative against the inroads of weather on wall surfaces of a house in an exposed situation in the country, and that is a covering of tiles or slates, and yet the charms of half-timber work and roughcast have too often prevailed over a more durable method in many cases where prudent ownership would veto them. Half-timber work, as most of my readers doubtless know, is in most cases only a sham, and not real construction. The building by-laws may be the cause of this, by insisting on a brick wall being built up solidly inside

it, and so discouraging an honestly built-up frame work of solid timber in which the plaster-panels may be so inserted as to defy the inroads of the weather. On the other hand, I have known (even in the work of not undistinguished architects years ago) cases in which the half-timber effect was saved to the design only by having an utter sham built up of thin stained deal. When building for oneself at least, such sham work is foolish in the extreme.

In the weathering qualities of a house we are somewhat apt to overlook the value of wings and projections which may do much to give shelter from the direction of prevailing winds. But it may be noted that the value of an outer porch or *porte cochère* for the benefit of those waiting the answer to the bell is too often overlooked. It may be of more importance in the smaller house owing to the greater number of visitors who arrive on foot, but the comfort and protection of an enclosed, or even a partially enclosed, porch should always be aimed for wherever possible. The enclosed porch is often managed within the main walls of the building; it does not at all follow that it must be an outstanding addition. The arrangement of the outer entrances and final entrance to hall and rooms should always be carefully considered and this is one of the points on which a client may hold decided views.

An architect who has really learnt something about architecture should not be in danger of mistaking eccentricity for character, or mere oddity for architectural interest, and he will not give up well-approved traditional types of design for sake of mere novelty. But whilst there is such keen competition in every profession it would appear that even the best men may be tempted to do a little shouting and sacrifice their own beliefs for the wishes of clients, and in such cases we cannot expect the best results. The very essence of good house designs of the average sort should be a quiet and unostentatious simplicity, for even simplicity may sometimes savour of ostentation. But it is well to remember, both for client and architect, that theories may be pushed too far and that true success must range between extremes. If we are going to make architecture we must not stop short at mere building, and even beyond the question of good outline for our building, and good proportion between solids and voids there is a necessity for architectural detail or emphasis which can usually be obtained even in the simplest and cheapest building. It is as cheap to make a good architectural finish to a

chimney as a bad one. And the cost of a well-designed door hood or a window bracket is not usually prohibitive even in the cheapest work; there is generally an opportunity to give some little item of interesting detail which has not done duty a hundred times before. It is not generally realized that in a very large amount of building something better than the usual paper and paint is possible in the way of decorative effect. Many thousand front doors to houses are standing evidence of the false economy of a painted door instead of one of hard wood which, though it costs more at first, needs no further cost of maintenance like a painted one. Many a house has been built with painted barge boards and wooden fascia which in the painting soon costs as much as stone coping. Thousands of bay windows in cheap houses have cost as much in cut stonework and ornamental ironwork as would have paid for some quaint and durable tilework. And so on—one might traverse the whole field of false economies to prove that good work pays best.

Of all the foolish sayings which have been placed at the disposal of the British public, one of the best-known and most foolish is that "fools build houses for wise men to live in." Because there are many notable instances of folly in house-building, we are invited to overlook the fact that house-building has been one of the best sources of profit to speculators and has in numberless cases proved the stepping-stone for people of small incomes to the possession of real estate. The fact is that house-building by private owners is a thing to be encouraged by every means, both for the sake of the community and the individual. The interest created by the possession of house property tends to make the owner a better citizen, and to encourage an intelligent concern for equitable law and government and the wise administration of local affairs. Once let a man realize that he has a genuine asset in the land, which good development will increase and consolidate, and he becomes a valuable unit in the forces which tend to the well-being of the whole community.

And it is always to be remembered that a man's interest in his possessions may be in inverse ratio to their intrinsic value. The owner of broad acres and lordly mansions often cannot take the same satisfaction in their possession which the careful owner of a small cottage property does. In the one case care and interest add to the value, and may almost mark the difference between independence and

destitution, whilst in the other anything more or less is of small account. In regard to the poorest classes the ownership of houses would appear to be a question of great moment, and schemes which encourage it should have the best support.

But whilst so much is being done in this direction, the middle or lower middle-classes are not getting anything like the advantages which they might when the possibilities of modern financial arrangements are borne in mind. They certainly ought to be house-owners in far greater numbers.

In the very poorest dwelling some measure of art is possible. Good proportion is not dependent on size. Comfort in plan is not impossible in the simplest home. Still, the limitations are pretty severe, and, except in the design of large numbers of cottages at one time or in one place, the help of a skilful designer can hardly be obtained. But in the houses which come between the simple cottage and the large country house there is opportunity for much architectural skill, in creating a distinctive quality of simple design which may be exceedingly pleasing, and all the more valuable for the strict limitations of size and cost which are imposed upon it.

Now, in this wide range of effort which comes between the country home of the rich and the small cottage of the very poor, we have been fortunate in the designs of English architects, and it is not too much to say that no country in the world is so well served in this class of design. There are numberless homes of modest size and cost scattered all over the British Isles to-day which bespeak a genuine artistic instinct on the part of their designers, and which prove that no building, however restricted in size or cost, need be inartistic, either in exterior and general proportions or its interior furnishing.

Though there is a considerable amount of indifference as to the quality of house design amongst householders, we must admit an ever-increasing interest in the matter among the more intelligent portion of the population, and it is perhaps not too much to hope that something may be said in the course of the following pages which may help house builders, owners, or buyers to look at the subject of house architecture from a more sympathetic and intelligent standpoint than hitherto.

A word may be said here as to the function of the architect. It is to be feared that too many folk regard him as an interloper, an

unnecessary evil, or at least as a sort of policeman who will prevent the contractor cheating them! Different views are taken even by professional men regarding the true mission of the architect, and a most distinguished architect has said that the one thing paramount in his services must be to see that his clients get good, sound building, that Art (with a capital A) is merely by the way, and thrown in, and that Art can never be really paid for at all! I hold a contrary view, that it is the mission of the architect to supply Art, and that it is worth paying for so much Art as will give one a properly proportioned building with a good outline and general form, and well-planned apartments. Nothing can really be satisfactory about a house unless this initial quality is obtained, and good tasteful furnishing, much as it may do, can never atone for the lack of these prime architectural qualities. Surely then, the architect ranks as a factor of the first importance to establish the possibility of beautiful homes. But beyond this, either the architect or a skilled decorator can guide the public in the final choice of finishings and furnishings, so that the bewildering variety of good materials may be used to a harmonious result. Nearly every one thinks he has good taste, but the choice and selection of wall-papers, of curtain fabrics, of carpets, of furniture, of table utensils, too often prove quite the contrary. And ample justification is every day made out for the spending of money over that artistic direction which a good architect can bestow in the creation of a home.

I cannot let this opportunity pass without speaking of the unfair usurpation of the architect's functions which is so much in evidence at the present time, more especially in the interior decoration, fitment, and furnishing of the home. Everybody knows what enterprise has been shown during many years past in the building up of commercial houses, whose business it is to supply, to put together, to design, and to superintend the decoration and furnishing of buildings. And it must be admitted that in many of these enterprises a considerable amount of good taste and careful judgment is employed. But to the architect who has learned his art well, and knows how to judge critically as to the when, and where, and how, of the many nice points to be considered in the making of good interior effects, the unfettered freedom of the business decorator must often produce most unsatisfactory results, and I know of two recent large houses where the business firms called in by

the clients have spent thousands of pounds in doing everything which the architect designedly left undone! Much might be said on this subject, but I feel that the architect's case ought to be stated; especially where so much is to be said on the other side! If an architect has been called in to design a house, and, when the carcase is built, is requested to leave one or two apartments to the entire design and execution of a firm of decorators, it is hardly likely that the result will be all that could be wished, nor can it be considered a fair treatment of the architect. But besides such cases as this, there are many in which when a mansion or house is to be decorated, extended, or improved, no architect is consulted at all, but an estimate is obtained from a firm of decorators who carry out and design the whole. Now from the architect's point of view, the result would be much better if the design were prepared by a capable designer, and dealt with and paid for as *a matter apart from the commercial handling of the work*. If the client in reply says that it is an outlay which might be saved, one may point out that the client is quite sure to have to pay for the architectural design in the end wherever it comes from. In the interest of the public no less than that of the profession, one feels it only right to protest against the way in which the architect is sometimes elbowed out of his legitimate work, for which by training he is so much better qualified than those who supplant him. He cannot compete with business firms by advertisement and frequently has to stand aside whilst opportunities for the exercise of his skill, acquired by years of study and thought, are seized by those who can make themselves better heard. The architecture or decorative interiors produced by commercial firms is nearly always a revival of dead men's bones! Perhaps it does not profess to be much more, and possibly the work of architects is sometimes open to a similar criticism, but surely one does obtain from the services of a trained architect, with his backing of professional tradition, the best and most satisfying results. It must always be remembered that when an architect makes a design for a building, he leads up to and arranges for the finish of the interior effects from the very commencement (his mission is not to design a mere carcase), and no other can properly develop the final result.

II. GENERAL ILLUSTRATIONS

BEFORE coming to a detailed description of certain selected examples of recent house building some notes may well be given of several houses which may be said to be more or less typical of the efforts of designers during the last ten or twelve years. That no well marked type of design is very generally followed is due to the fact that the value of tradition is not well enough recognized. After the breaking away from the Queen Anne and Georgian traditions there began a series of reversions to other styles which included almost everything that could be called a style at all. A long, dull period of classic methods was one of the worst features which followed the Georgian work, and this was probably the most utterly lifeless period through which we have ever passed. The Gothic revival was, indeed, a change from this, but it is impossible in looking back to give much credit to the revivals of Gothic or Queen Anne work, until it began to be realized that the production of architectural values was a matter which was independent of any particular style. In the long list of capable men who made domestic architecture to revive and to interest people as an art, it is not easy to apportion the influences created to the real authors. We all know that Philip Webb, Norman Shaw, J. J. Stevenson, W. Eden Nesfield, Ernest George, and others, have largely affected the course of modern domestic art, though they would themselves be the first to disclaim any creation of new style. But it is certain that several such architects, whose work is now seen to have been of outstanding value, did invest their designs with a certain individuality and quality which imparted new life and charm to the art of house building. And it may be questioned whether a large portion of the excellent heritage of good home design which is seen in the practice of architects to-day is not largely attributable to the initiative of Norman Shaw and his direct pupils. Be that as it may, it is fully evident to the student of this phase of art that in quite recent years the level of the attainment has risen far beyond anything previously experienced in modern times, and that the influences at work are much more numerous. Of course, the develop-

ment of the accessory arts has had its reflex influence on architecture; generally perhaps this is wholly to the good, though in some cases it has tended to make architecture archaic, uncertain, or weak.

The illustration of the dining-room in Mr. Norman Shaw's own

FIG. 3. BATSFORD: ERNEST GEORGE, ARCHITECT

house at Hampstead was sketched twenty years or more ago, and the quality still appeals to one by its simple vigour and breadth (see frontispiece).

The great number of country houses, generally of large size, which have come from the hands of Mr. Ernest George have been a continual

source of pleasure to architects. The interiors of Batsford, illustrated in Figs. 2 and 3, afford some illustration of the character of a large number.

It would fill a volume to give any fair record of Mr. George's

FIG. 4. THE LIBRARY, EDGEWORTH MANOR:
ERNEST GEORGE AND YEATES, ARCHITECTS

doings in domestic architecture, but two or three illustrations must suffice. The library at Edgeworth Manor, with its oak timber roof and stone-lined walls, is one of the finest modern rooms of its kind. The drawing-room is a very successful instance of an elliptical domed ceiling covered with strap-work ornament. The rich walnut panelling,

FIG. 5. THE DRAWING ROOM, EDGEWORTH MANOR: ERNEST GEORGE AND YEATES, ARCHITECTS

the marble mantel-piece, and fine specimens of old furniture combine to produce a delightful interior.

FIG. 6. COTTAGE AT KNEBWORTH: E. L. LUTYENS, ARCHITECT

Amongst the many examples which might be given from the practice of Mr. E. L. Lutyens one could hardly select one more pleasing than that of the Cottage at Knebworth, which he designed for the Dowager Countess of Lytton. Here is an example of colour design in gray and white. The lower walls, of brickwork, are coated with whitewash through which the brick joints slightly show, and the upper parts in gables, are covered with elm boarding which is toned to a silvery gray. The higher part of the walls, with a pilaster treatment, between the flanking pavilions on the garden front, is painted white (see Fig. 6). The principal entrance has a semicircular plastered vault, the opening of which is crossed by the flat arch of the door. The main stairs are enclosed within walls and go up from the centre of the hall (see plan, Fig. 7). The view out to the open country

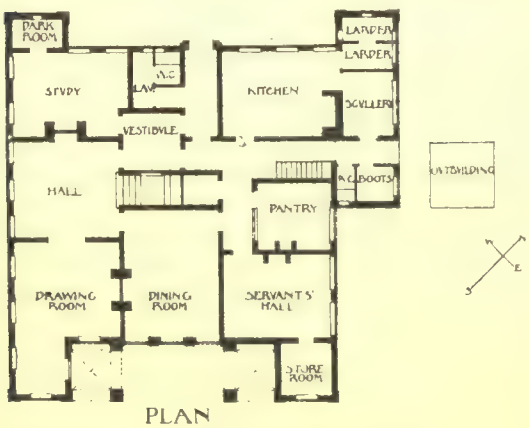


FIG. 7. COTTAGE AT KNEBWORTH

FIG. 8.

FIG. 9.

FIG. 10. THE BARN, EXMOUTH: E. S. PRIOR, ARCHITECT

from the dining-room between the little flanking loggia spaces is charming.

The value of thatched roofing as an aid to picturesque design is

FIG. 11. COTTAGE AT KNEBWORTH: E. L. LUTYENS, ARCHITECT

strikingly shown in the sketches of the Barn at Exmouth, built some years ago from the design of Mr. E. S. Prior (see Figs. 8, 9, and 10). This very picturesque essay in thatched house building was subse-

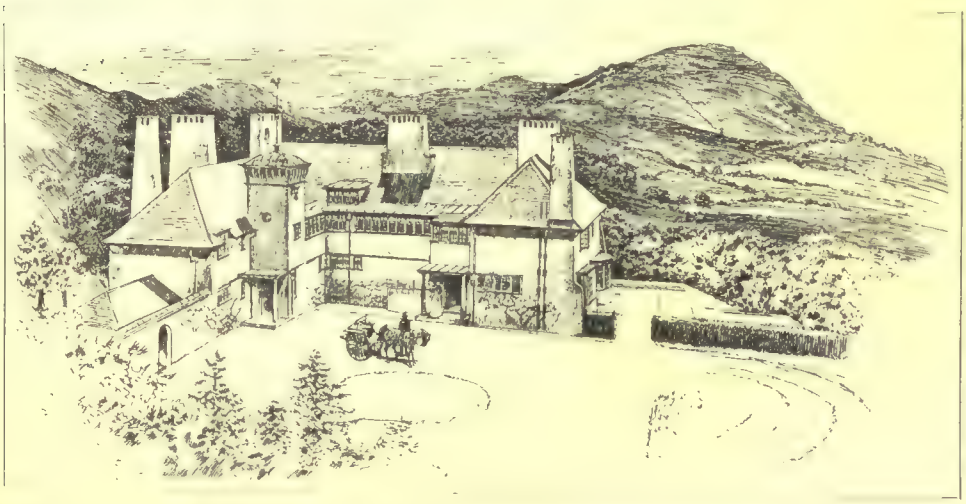


FIG. 12. PERRYCROFT, MALVERN: C. F. A. VOYSEY, ARCHITECT

quently burnt down. It is a signal example of what one may do with the easy adaptability of thatch to all sorts of agreeable outlines, and is one of the notable instances of modern house building of this kind. It

will be noticed how the lines of thatch may be curved and adapted to all sorts of roofing necessities, and that at one point the roof lines are continued along the thatched wall covering. That such a material is easily open to abuse and un-architectural treatment is obvious.

The characteristics by which so many of Mr. C. F. A. Voysey's country house designs are known are well exemplified in Perrycroft, Malvern (see Figs. 12 and 13). This house occupies a prominent site some little distance outside Great Malvern and its white walls and

FIG. 13. PERRYCROFT, GARDEN FRONT

green slate roofs may be noted at long distances as one drives in the neighbourhood. It is a characteristic example of a well-known style of modern work and the simplicity and breadth of its main lines will always afford satisfaction.

In the carrying out of unambitious and unaffected designs such as generally evidence something of the individuality of the architect, Mr. George Sherrin has been very successful, and The Long House near Leatherhead is a good instance of one of the larger houses he has built during a very extensive practice in house design. A hall going through two stories, with a pleasant gallery in the upper part, is a good feature in the scheme (see Fig. 14). A nice arrangement of garden terrace and an architecturally treated conservatory are points to note

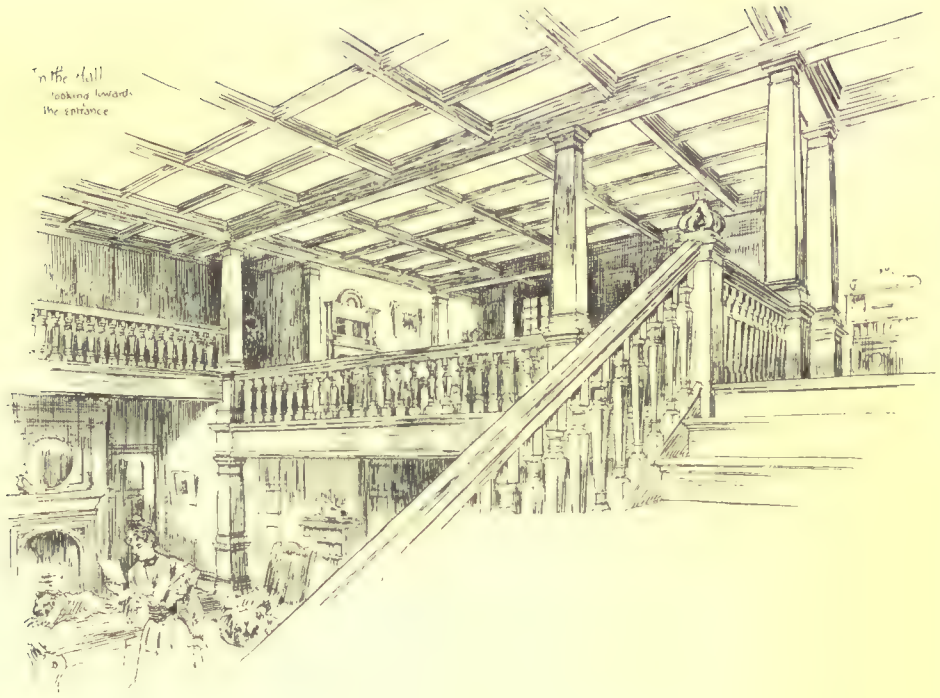


FIG. 14.

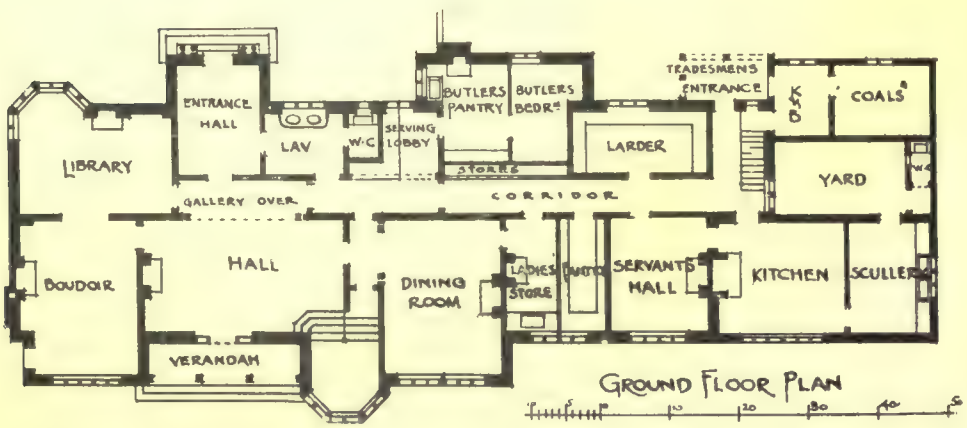


FIG. 15. THE LONG HOUSE, LEATHERHEAD: GEORGE SHERRIN, ARCHITECT

on the exterior (see Fig. 16). The long dominating line of the main roof and a good entrance porch also claim notice.

What is called Fashion has its application to house architecture as to all else, and we may look back over the past century with its record of classic villas (largely in cement), Gothic mansions, and Queen Anne homes in confirmation. But after the revived Gothic had had its fling there began to grow up a realization that the real success and charm of a home did not depend on the style of its architecture, but was dependent on comfort and convenience of plan, and on prime architectural

FIG. 16. THE LONG HOUSE, LEATHERHEAD

qualities which could be expressed in any style. Consequently, we may turn back many pages in our architectural history and dwell with pleasure on designs which would be considered very much out of fashion to-day.

It may perhaps here be remarked that there can be found little outstanding success in domestic architecture which has not been the work of men more or less devoted to that branch of architectural practice. The sense of domesticity, simplicity, and of comfortable homeliness which is so desirable in the multitude of moderate sized homes, does not come so readily to one who is chiefly engaged in the erection of commercial or public buildings. Only in the large mansion is there a proper outlet for the large manner, the grand air, or the

FIG. 17. BIDSTON COURT: GRAYSON AND OULD, ARCHITECTS

grandiose dignity chiefly associated with public work. In such houses where we expect to find a vista at every point, where doors may be ten feet high, and wide corridors and ample staircases are a necessity, the general feeling associated with the bulk of domestic architecture must be disregarded, and for comfort's sake we may have to design a home within a mansion for the owner's private use as we find at Eaton Hall and other places. With the design of houses on a large scale we are not mainly concerned in this book, but it will be of interest to record the very able reproduction of old methods in the Bidston Court

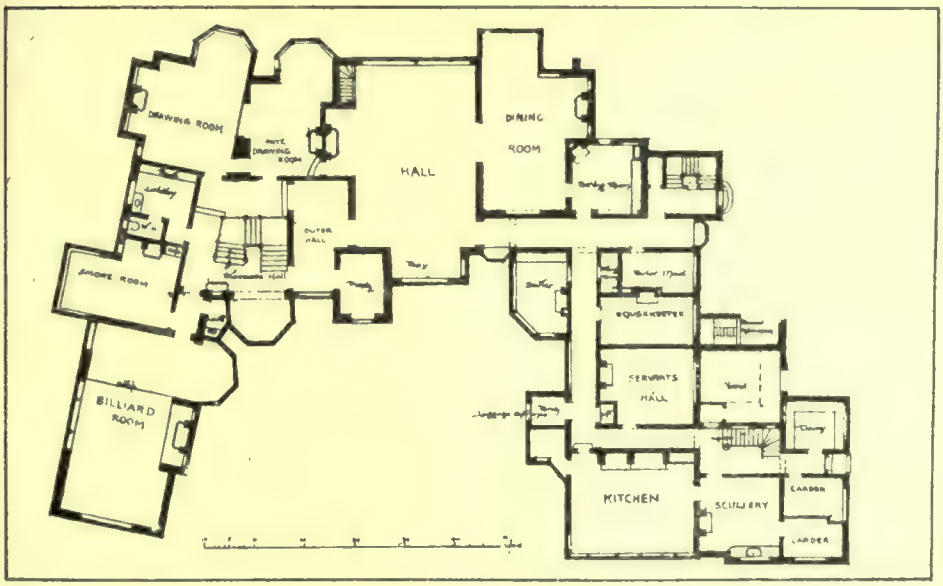


FIG. 18. BIDSTON COURT

Cheshire, which the architects, Messrs. Grayson and Ould, frankly founded on old Moreton Hall by the express desire of their client. All the sturdy picturesqueness of the prototype has been preserved in the work and it is like the wonderful revival of a beautiful old picture (see Fig. 17). It will be seen from the plan that the needs of modern life have not been overlooked (see Fig. 18). Coming suddenly into view of this large group of half-timbered work in its fine setting of trees on a lovely site it must be admitted that the effect is very captivating. And the result is not only due to picturesque grouping and detail, but to the charming tone and texture of the whole.

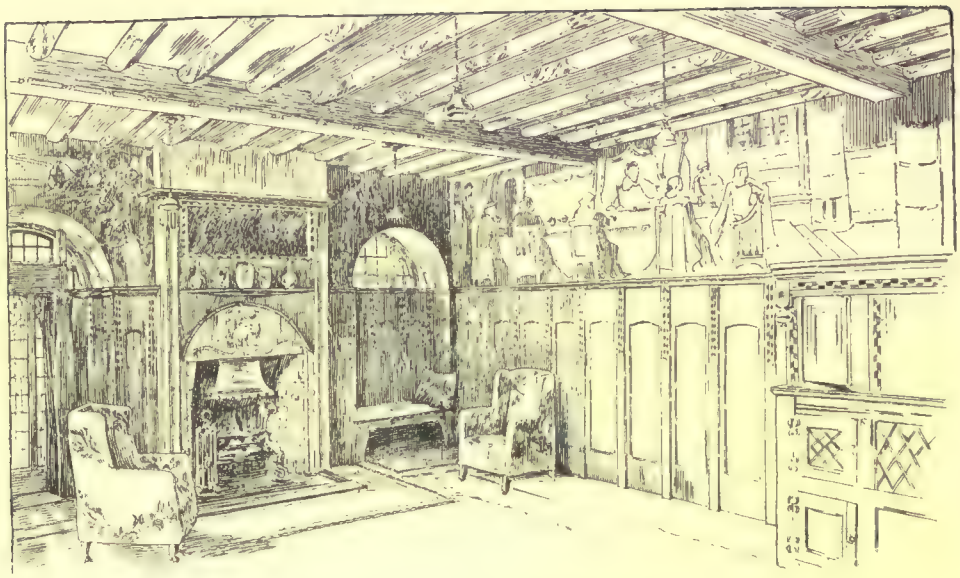


FIG. 19. BERKELEY LODGE (DRAWING ROOM): EDGAR WOOD, ARCHITECT

FIG. 20. MUNSTEAD WOOD: E. L. LUTYENS, ARCHITECT

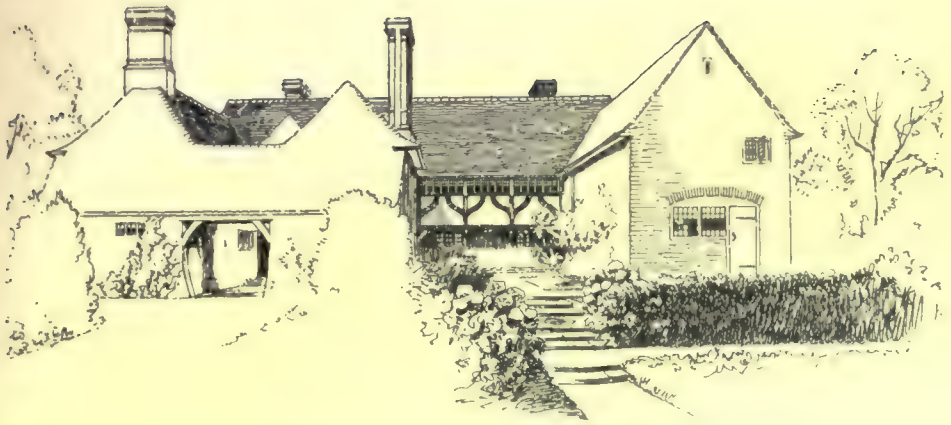


FIG. 21. MUNSTEAD WOOD: GARDEN COURT VIEW

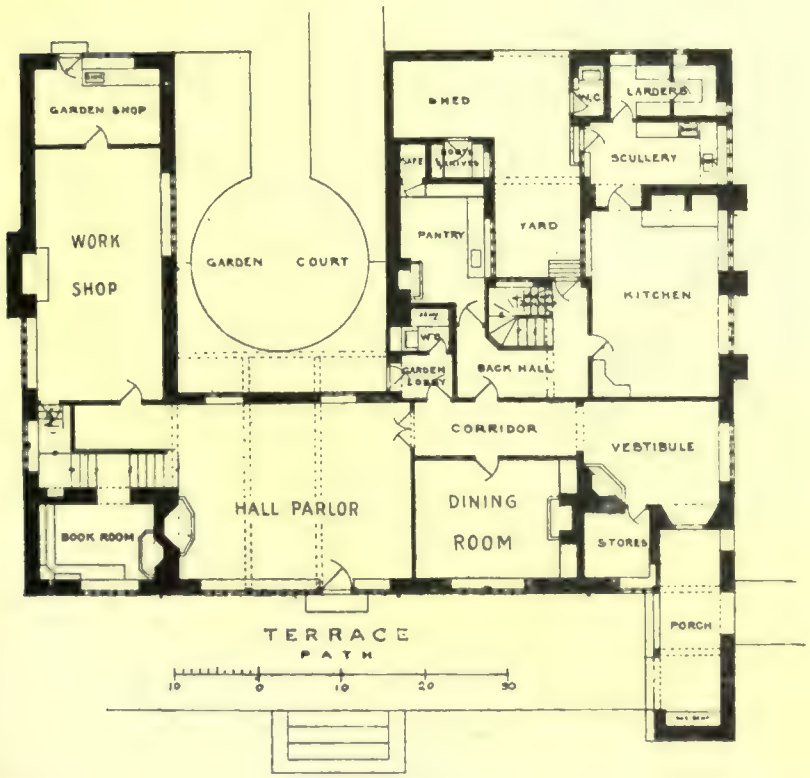


FIG. 22. MUNSTEAD WOOD

The use of good decorative painting is not within the means of many, but when it is executed as suggested in the drawing of Berkeley Lodge drawing-room (see Fig. 19), we have an interesting collaboration between architect and painter which produces a highly decorative effect. The objection to the hanging of pictures on a wall in a more or less haphazard fashion is a reasonable one, and it must be conceded that picture frames are often very awkward features, casting dark shadows and providing unpleasant harbourage for dust and dirt. In

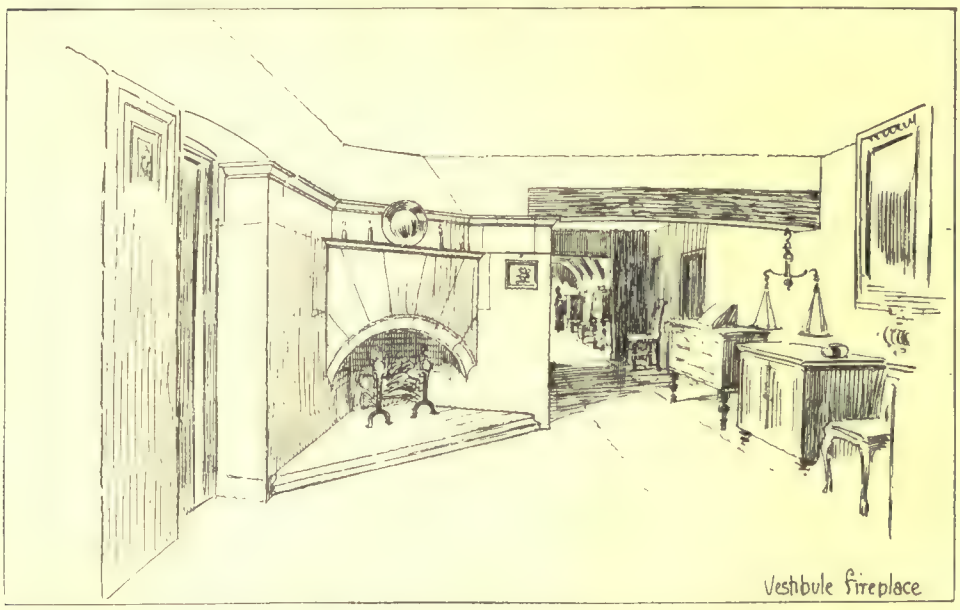


FIG. 23. MUNSTEAD WOOD

such a room as this no question of the ordinary picture frame can occur, for any picture would be quite *de trop* in the scheme.

Because it is not only a beautiful home, but also the creation, with its lovely domain of wood and garden, of Miss Gertrude Jekyll, I include some notes of Munstead Wood which is one of Mr. Lutyens' most successful homes of moderate size (see Figs. 20, 21, 22, 23, and 24). It is quite impossible in the space at my disposal to attempt to convey the charm of this most delightful amongst the many modern homes I have seen. The house seems to nestle down in its beautiful environment with that unaffected simplicity and quiet picturesqueness

which appears to be the peculiar heritage of the best English work (see Fig. 20). Those who are fortunate enough to see the place when Miss Jekyll's skilful gardening is at one of its best periods (and they come at intervals all the year round!) will feel that here gardening and architecture are combined to a result seldom accomplished. This house of Miss Jekyll's is without any exact parallel, for the altogether exceptional ability of the owner in gardening design and culture has created in the surroundings of her home a very fairy-

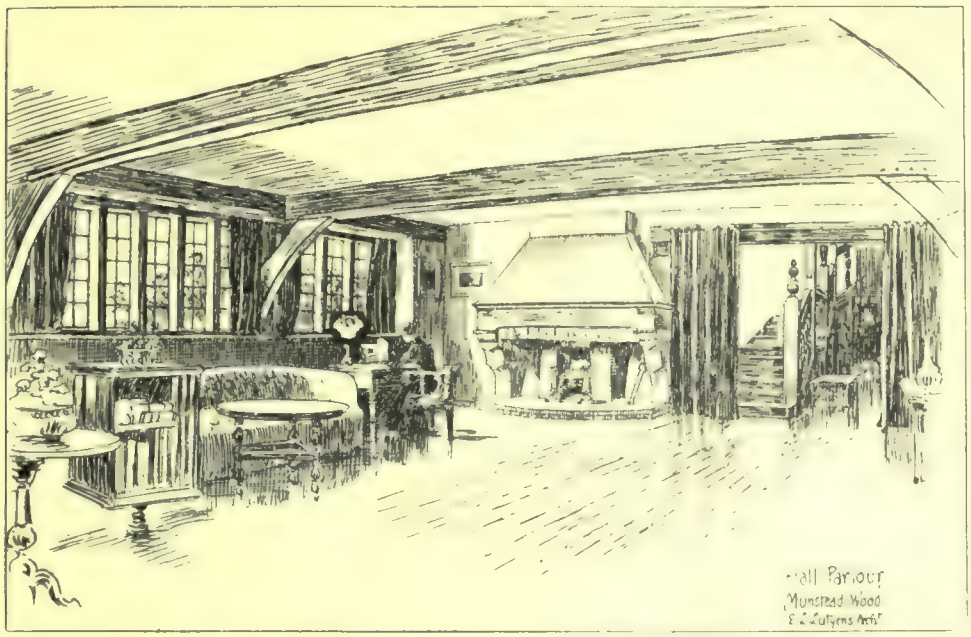


FIG. 24. MUNSTEAD WOOD

land of pleasure. Whether it be in the beautiful woodland with its cleverly reserved culture, introduced with rare skill amongst natural growth, or in the delicious little bit of formal gardening near the house, or the glorious herbaceous border which in each succeeding season is a feast for the eye of gardener and artist, or in the great kitchen garden with its beautiful mingling of flowers and fruit, or the long evergreen alley which leads down to the gardener's cottage, there is no way in which one can turn within the domain of Munstead Wood, which is not a source of fresh and never-ending pleasure. This is no exaggeration of description in any sense, and looking over a long experience of English homes and gardens I come back to this

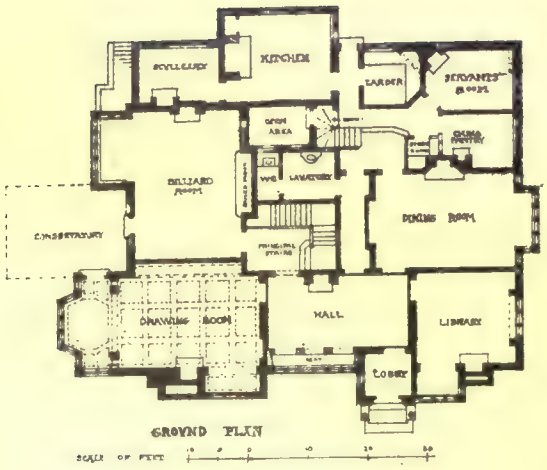


FIG. 25.

FIG. 26. HOMESIDE, WIMBLEDON: E. G. MAY, ARCHITECT

beautiful result of expert knowledge with the most abiding memory of delight.

The plan of Homeside at Wimbledon works out very well in

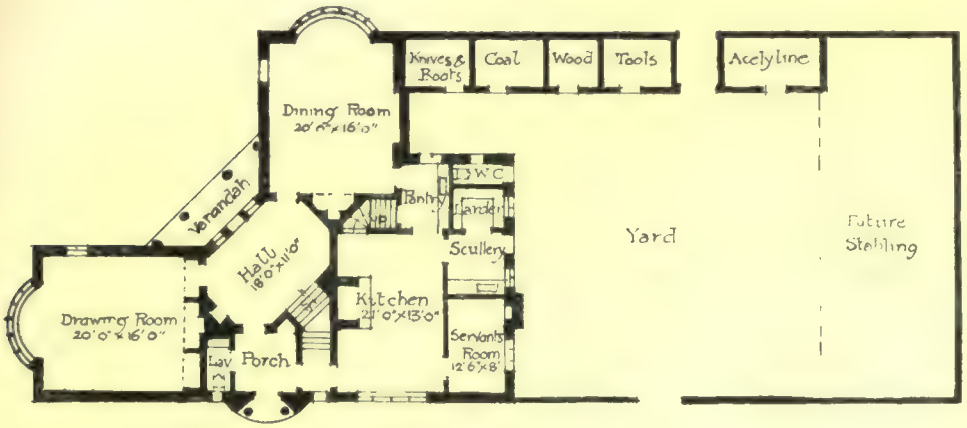


FIG. 27.

FIG. 28. HOUSE AT LIMPSFIELD: WILLS AND ANDERSON, ARCHITECTS

execution and the development of it in the cosy little vaulted hall is the special reason for its illustration here (see Fig. 25). The outstanding posts in front of the window, carrying the plaster vault, come very nicely (see Fig. 26).

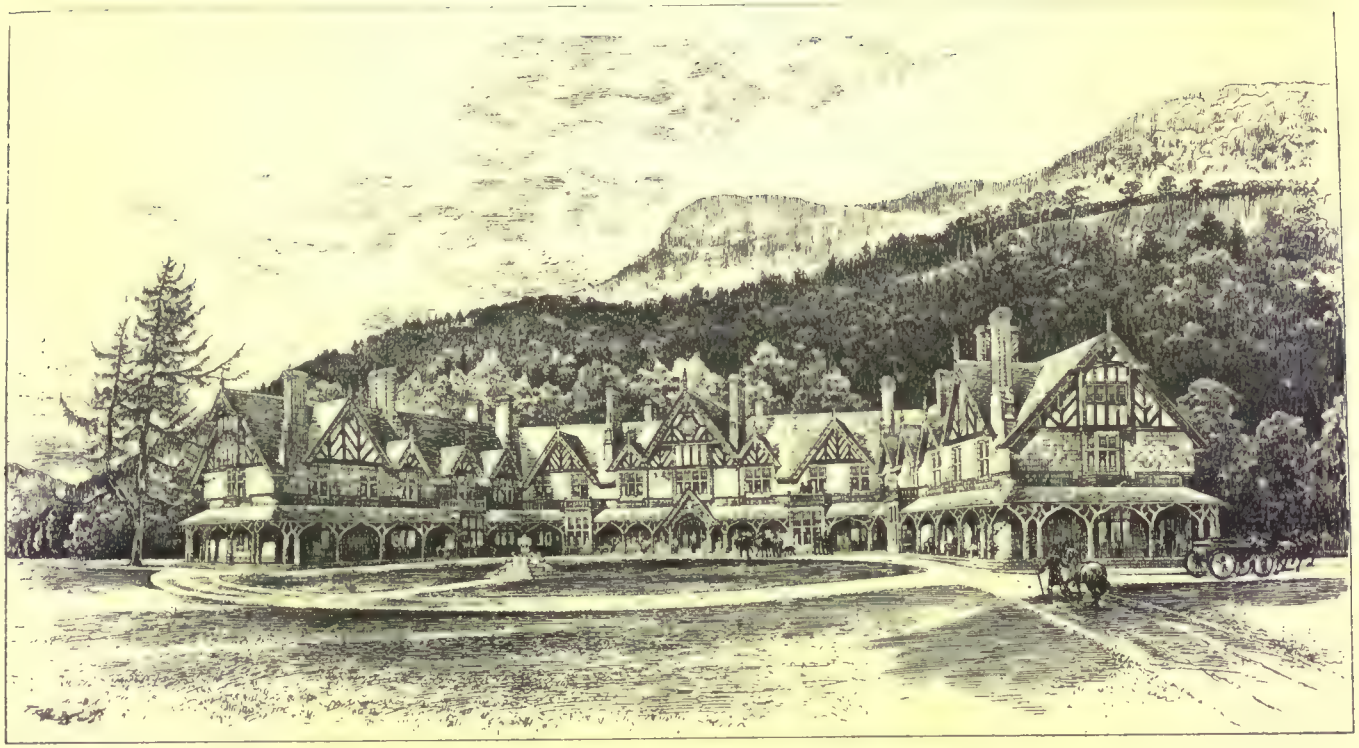


FIG. 29. MAR LODGE: A. MARSHALL MACKENZIE, ARCHITECT

A house recently erected at Limpsfield shows the happy effect which may be obtained by an L-shaped plan where the re-entering angle is crossed by a gable with a loggia under. The result here is very good both in elevation and plan (see Figs. 27 and 28). The meeting of the various walls in the angle is so cleverly managed that

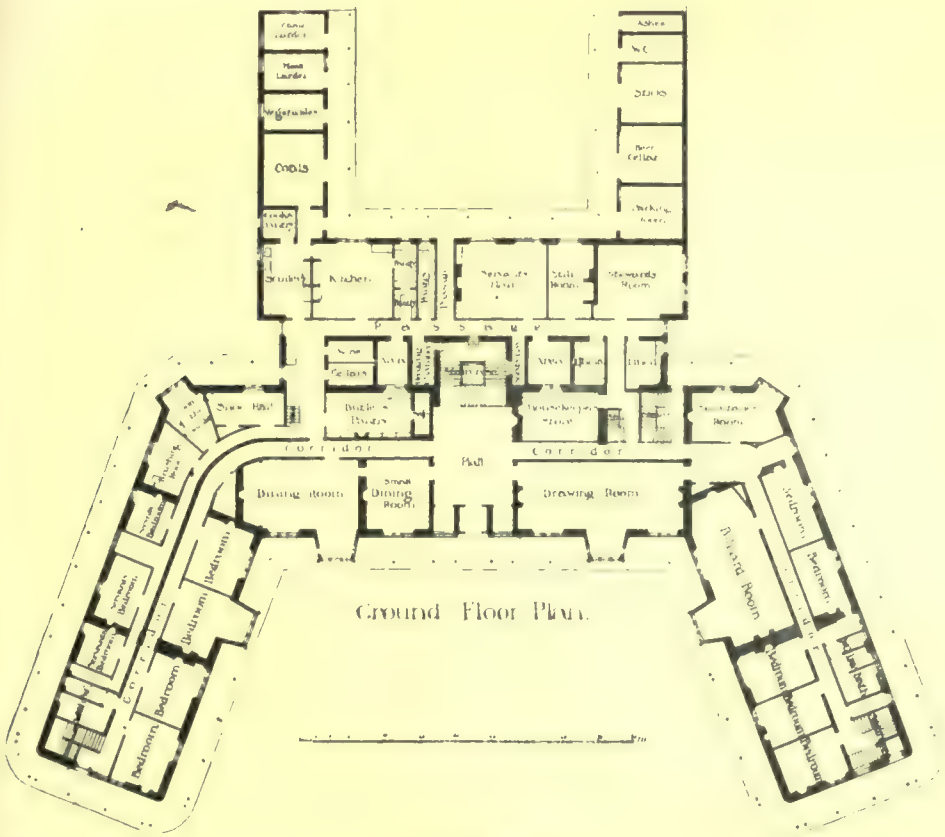


FIG. 30. MAR LODGE

the advantages gained are not counterbalanced by any awkward points as is so often the case in plans of unusual type.

In Mar Lodge we have a cottage effect combined with the plan of a great country home of some sixty bedrooms (see Figs. 29 and 30). It is here given chiefly as a happy rendering of a quadrangle with sloping sides—due, I believe, to the initiative of H.R.H. the Princess Royal (Duchess of Fife)—and it also illustrates the effect of a cottage type of building, nestling under the fine hill and outlines of Scottish

scenery. A building like this on the crest of a hill would appear far less in keeping than would the stern outline of an old Scottish castle, but this picturesque group lying snugly ensconced on level ground under shelter of the wooded hill is very pleasing.

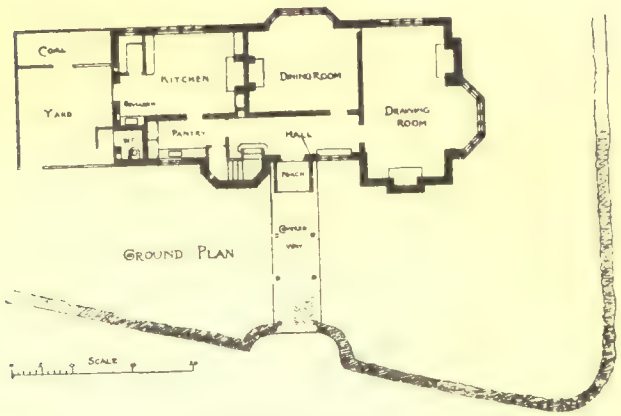


FIG. 31. NORATO: GEORGE SHERRIN, ARCHITECT

Norato proved one of the cheapest modern houses of architectural quality which I have ever seen. It is very pleasantly situated on high ground. The site being at an angle where two roads meet, it was found expedient to place it as indicated, set back from each frontage and that

FIG. 32. NORATO

led to the erection of a covered way from the road to the entrance, which is a very pleasant feature of the house, as will be noted in my sketch, which shows how nicely the long line of roof comes from the

road (see Figs. 31, 32, and 33). The unusual feature of this house is just this covered approach, which is built very simply and yet in such a way as to give some character to the building. It is supported on wood posts and has a tiled roof with an excellent bit of decorative plaster-work in the gable, containing a coat of arms.

Drimcong illustrates a compact plan of a simple and economical building at Aldershot wherein the special feature is a large room on the ground floor which has a high ceiling half way up the roof allowing a little gallery to be arranged across one end, entered from the level of

FIG. 33. NORATO

the bedroom floor. The frieze and ceiling of this large room are all finished in cream toned plaster with moulded ribs. The walls are papered. The arched beams under the gallery with its white balusters make a good feature at one end of the room. At the other end is the fireplace with stone arch round the quaint hob grate, and a simply panelled overmantel. The long window, with red brick mullions and fixed seat, is one of those things which prove of abiding value to the architectural mind (see Figs. 34 and 35). This modest cottage most satisfactorily shows the advantage of that idea which has gained so much prevalence in recent times, viz., the planning of one large room

in a small house, so that the advantages of ample space which usually belong only to the large house may be obtained in one apartment at least without any undue cost. Such a room as that here illustrated has

FIG. 34. DRIMCONG: GEORGE SHERRIN, ARCHITECT

the generous air of height and area usually to be found only in quite large houses and yet the cost of this house was very moderate. With one such room not only is the everyday pleasure of living greatly enhanced, but the pleasures of entertainment are very largely increased.

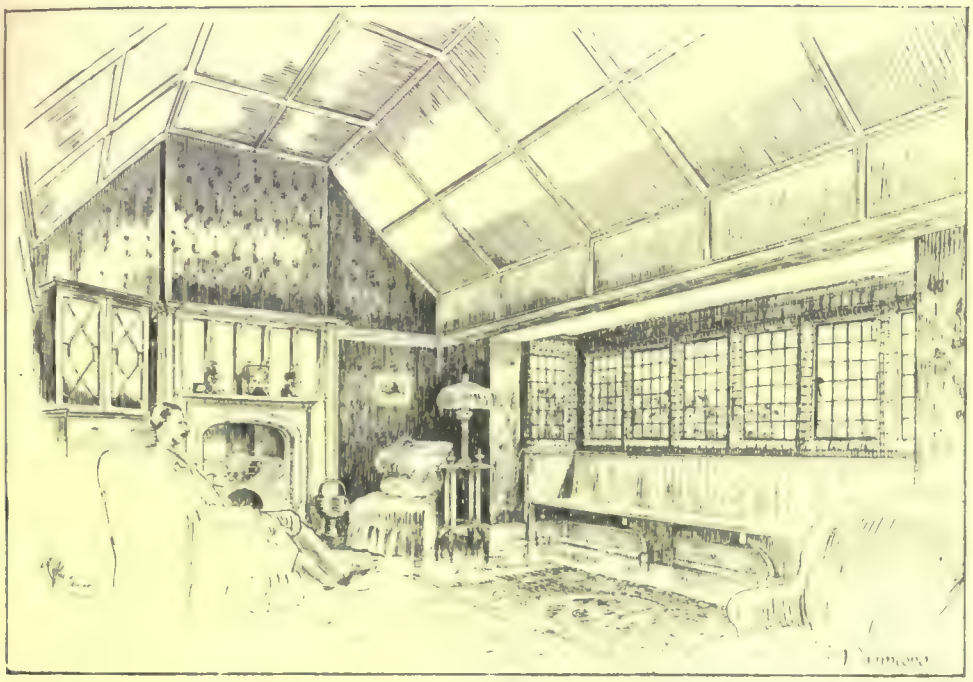


FIG. 35.

W.C.
STABLE
COAL
W.C.
BEDROOM
KITCHEN
DRAWING ROOM
DINING-ROOM
OUTER HALL
BEDROOM
BEDROOM
BEDROOM

FIG. 36.

The dining-room is comparatively small, for its purpose is designedly that of a place for meals. The little outer hall is of good size for so

FIG. 37. MESYLLS: MAURICE H. POCOCK, ARCHITECT

small a house and the wise arrangement of butler's pantry and kitchen will be noted, as also the absence of a separate scullery (see Fig. 36).

Mesylls is built in a level country with woodland pleasantly

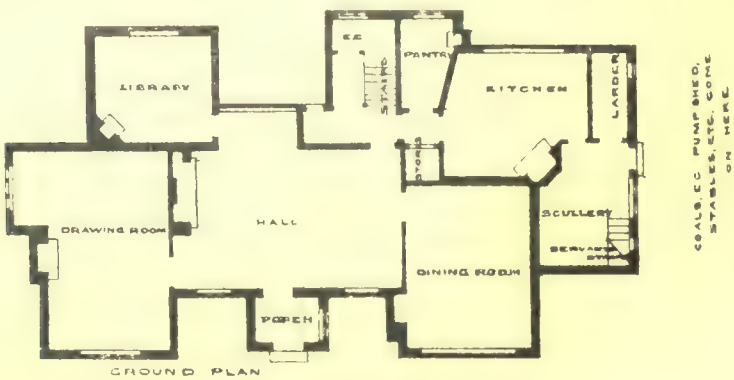


FIG. 38. MESYLLS

bounding one side of the site. It is set some distance back from the road and the length of straight carriage drive leading up to the centre of a symmetrically balanced front produces a little hint of dignified formality which is very agreeable (see Fig. 37). The plan (see Fig. 38)

FIG. 39.

FIG. 40.

is a good example of the effectiveness of cross lights in the hall and drawing-room, the whole interior when I saw it being rendered especially attractive by all sorts of beautiful old furniture and decorative objects. An item of special interest is Mr. Godfrey Blount's plaster decoration to the cove over the drawing-room fireplace, the modelling of which is delightfully soft and broad in treatment (see Fig. 40).

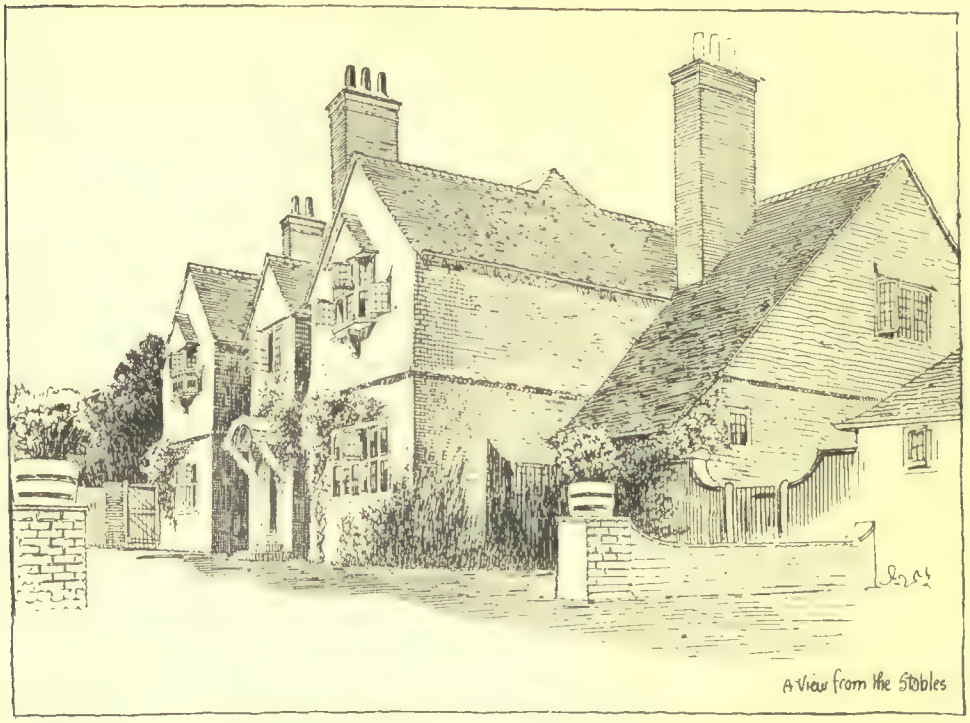


FIG. 41. MESYLLS

Three old cottages standing two together and one a short distance apart suggested the linking of the whole together in one house as here shown in Cherrycroft, and it must be admitted that the result is interesting (see Figs. 42 and 43). Exteriorly the whole length is dominated by the entirely new portion covered by a higher transverse roof as shown in my sketch (see Fig. 44). The taste of the owner transformed the garden ground into a picture of delight. The central parlour or hall opens out through a deep bay window on to the garden. The simple treatment of it all, with some items of beautiful decoration

like the very fine Chinese embroidery over the ingle-nook, leaves in one's mind a memory of quality which is not too common (see Fig. 45).

How an old barn may be joined into the economy of an old farm

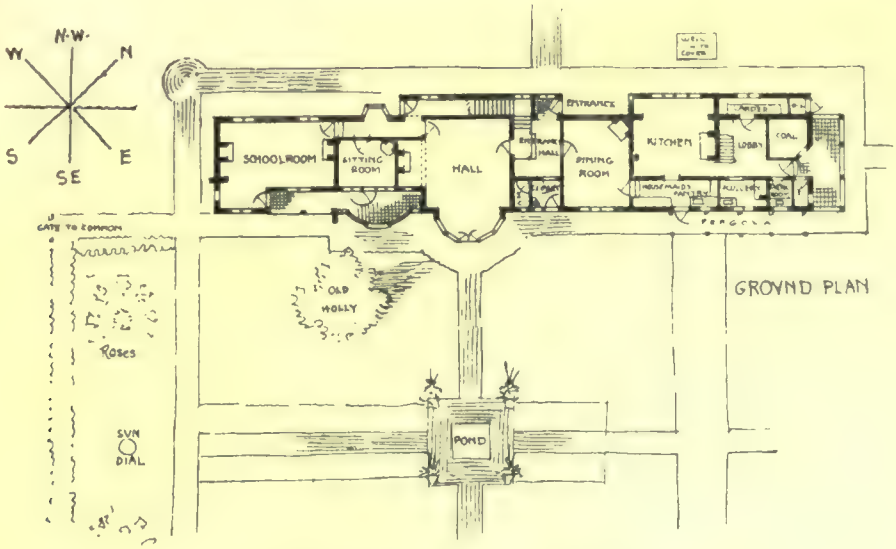


FIG. 42. CHERRYCROFT: E. W. MARSHALL, ARCHITECT

cottage is excellently shown in the Redhill Farm by Messrs. Niven and Wigglesworth. The substantial timbers in the ceiling, the deep arched recess for the farther window, and the broad, low arch to the

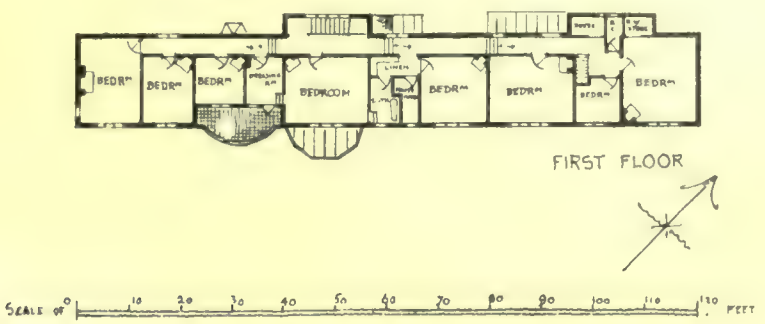


FIG. 43. CHERRYCROFT

fireplace with quaint blue and white tiled cheeks and back, and a projecting stone hearth made of an old moulded stone discovered on the site, are good features of this interior (see Figs. 46 and 47). It suggests what may be built up on the foundations of existing old work.

FIG. 44.

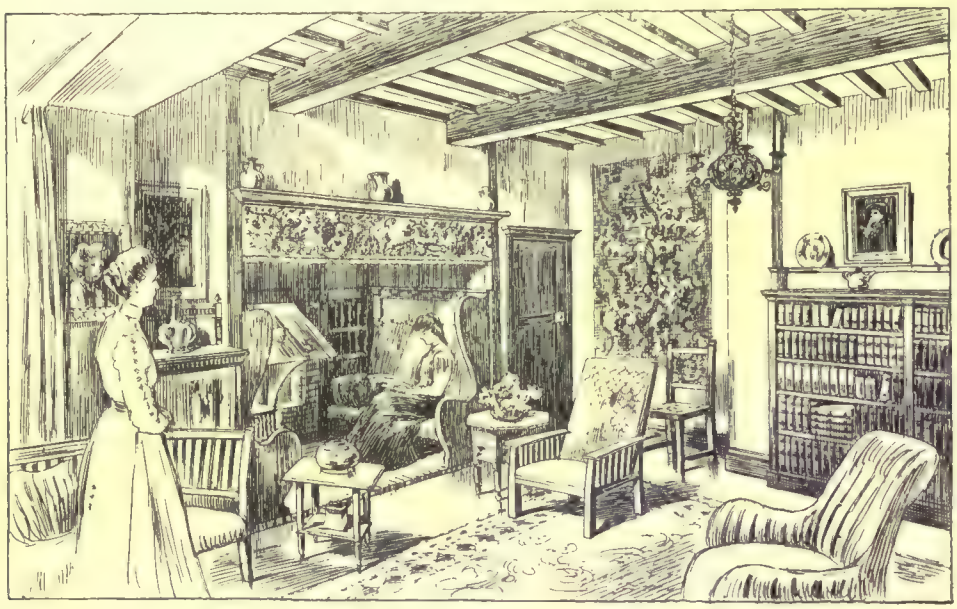


FIG. 45. CHERRYCROFT

Though the mansion of Paddockhurst is a large place and somewhat outside the special purpose of this book, an illustration is given of the dining-room which formed part of Sir Aston Webb's recent additions there for Sir Weetman Pearson (see Fig. 48). This fine room illustrates the decorative effect which may be obtained by rich materials and high class craftsmanship, but it is only an illustration in a costly manner of the type of permanent constructive decoration which is available in simpler ways. The wall panelling is of the finest specimens of mahogany which are procurable, and the large simply treated panels illustrate the magnificent quality of the wood perfectly.

FIG. 46. REDHILL FARM: NIVEN AND WIGGLESWORTH, ARCHITECTS

The frieze is in gesso by Mr. Walter Crane and illustrates the history of locomotion. The ceiling is in finely modelled decorative plaster. The mantel-pieces are beautiful examples of marble. Some of the best modern carving to be met with decorates the panels in the minstrel's gallery. And lastly, very fine specimens of metal-work are to be found in the electric pendants. The whole room shows what can be done by a combination of rich materials and fine workmanship when well designed.

The little private chapel attached to the house at Heathfield has given the architect, Mr. Basil Champneys, an opportunity to make an interesting group of buildings, and the whole effect of the domestic

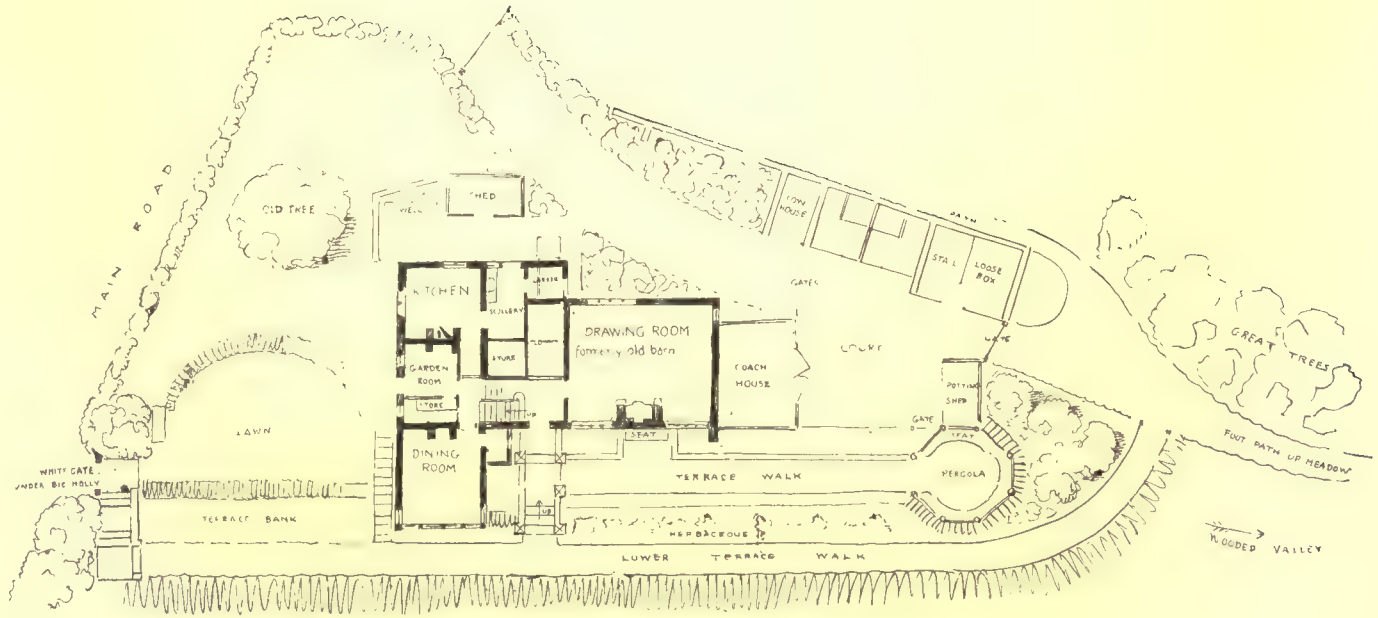


FIG. 47. REDHILL FARM

FIG. 48. PADDOCKHURST (THE DINING ROOM): SIR ASTON WEBB, R.A., ARCHITECT

work in contrast with the late Gothic chapel with its domed chancel, is very pleasing. The stable buildings are made to square up the

FIG. 49. HOUSE AT HEATHFIELD: BASIL CHAMPNEYS, ARCHITECT

entrance quadrangle, and architects will appreciate the quality of an admirable plan (see Figs. 49, 51, and 52).

It would be beyond my purpose to review the steps by which

FIG. 50. AN OLD SHROPSHIRE FARMHOUSE

English homes have been gradually developed. As we all know, the charm of old English houses is not limited to one period, nor do we find it limited to houses of a certain size or cost. All over the land we

FIG. 51.

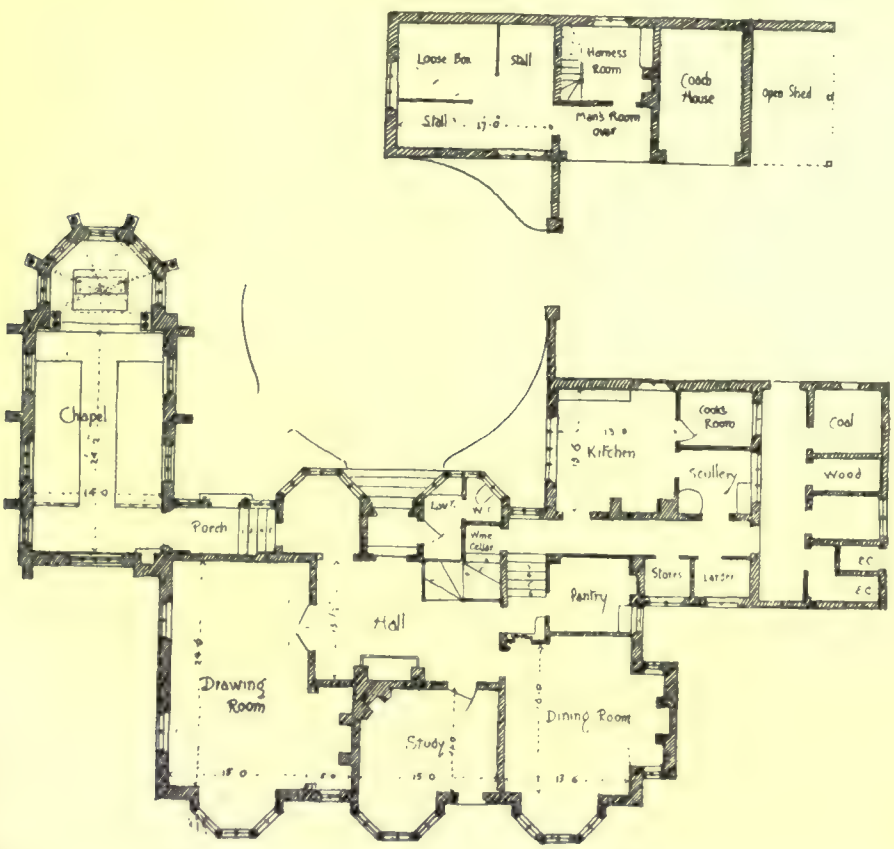


FIG. 52. HOUSE AT HEATHFIELD: BASIL CHAMPNEYS, ARCHITECT

FIG. 53. DOWGILL HALL, YORKSHIRE

FIG. 54. LIVERSEDGE HALL

have examples of delightful work and we may equally admire the Shropshire Farm in black and white (see Fig. 50), the old Tudor hall in stone (see sketch of Liversedge, Fig. 54), or the prim but well-

FIG. 55. HAYES BARTON, THE BIRTHPLACE OF SIR WALTER RALEIGH, AN OLD DEVONSHIRE HOUSE WITH THATCHED ROOF

FIG. 56. AN OLD DEVONSHIRE STONE HOUSE

proportioned Renaissance house of which Dowgill Hall is typical (see Fig. 53). Although this latter came near the last stage of good traditional work, it is a type one cannot help liking and it may be studied to great advantage in Messrs. Field and Bunney's book.[1] Two other

[1] "Architecture of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries." George Bell and Sons.

FIG. 57. HOLLYCOMBE LIPHOOK: GEORGE SHERRIN, ARCHITECT

interesting types of old Devonshire houses are also here given (see Figs. 55 and 56). It is certainly difficult to find the simplicity, breadth, and nice expression of these old houses in our modern work, but I give here a wing of a modern home by Mr. Lutyens which has a genuine touch of the old feeling (see Fig. 58). In his Hollycombe Liphook (see Fig. 57) it will be seen that Mr. Sherrin has obtained something of that quality of sturdy breadth which distinguishes our old stone Tudor houses; the tower might almost have come down to us direct from the

FIG. 58. A MODERN HOME: E. L. LUTYENS, ARCHITECT

FIG. 59. AN OLD BLACK AND WHITE HOUSE.

FIG. 60. HOUSE AT DOVERCOURT: GEORGE SHERRIN, ARCHITECT.

Middle Ages. Yet this is an essentially modern home, and admirably fitted to modern need: two floors of the towers make excellent studios.

The rough, sturdy character of many old black and white houses is illustrated in Fig. 59, and may be contrasted with this kind of work

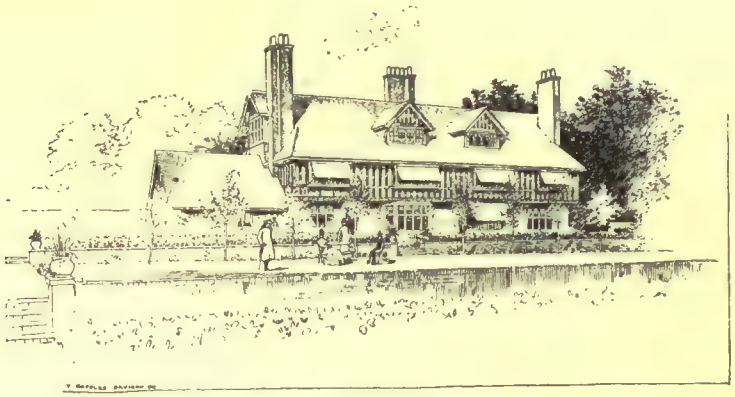


FIG. 61. THE GATEHOUSE, INGATESTONE (THE GARDEN FRONT): GEORGE SHERRIN, ARCHITECT

in modern homes (see Figs. 60 and 61). It is impossible to deny the charm of this construction, but building by-laws tell against our honest use of it and it is one of the worst methods unless very well executed. The tradition of Tudor home building in stone has been admirably followed in a House by the sea (see Fig. 62), built in North

FIG. 62. A HOUSE BY THE SEA: DOUGLAS AND FORDHAM, ARCHITECTS

Wales, and the fine mansion for Lord Sefton in North Lancashire (see Fig. 63). In Fox Oak, Weybridge (see Figs. 64 and 65), we have excellent examples from the able practice of an architect who has taken a considerable share in the development of the modern home.

I am tempted to give two illustrations here from the town practice

FIG. 63. LANCASHIRE SEAT OF THE EARL OF SEFTON:
DOUGLAS AND FORDHAM, ARCHITECTS

FIG. 64. THE BILLIARD ROOM, FOX OAK: HALSEY RICARDO, ARCHITECT

FIG. 65. THE GARDEN FRONT, FOX OAK: HALSEY RICARDO, ARCHITECT

of two architects who have done much admirable country house building. One of the finest town houses in London is that at the western end of Mount Street for the Earl of Plymouth, in which the architect, Mr. Fairfax B. Wade, has produced a series of apartments far above the ordinary type. The low-spreading vaulting in the entrance hall is carried from marble pillars and arches, and the general effect is spacious and dignified (see Fig. 67). The staircase and upper lounge hall are most ably designed and the whole mansion betokens a refined and capable handling. The other illustration of a town house is the ground plan of No. 12, Hill Street, which is a striking instance of what may be done to make a house interesting and attractive within the confined limits of a narrow city site (see Fig. 66). Its author, Mr. Flockhart, knows as well how to deal with the difficulties of small areas as with the ample and generous schemes of planning which are possible in country homes. He has recently built a great house in the north of Scotland, which is a veritable delight of picturesque features.

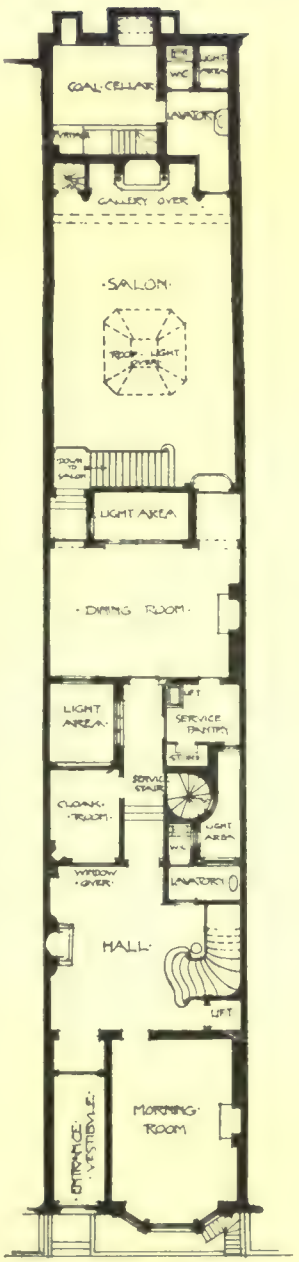


FIG. 66. NO. 12, HILL STREET

FIG. 67. ENTRANCE HALL, FOR THE EARL OF PLYMOUTH: FAIRFAX B. WADE, ARCHITECT

PART II
SELECTED EXAMPLES

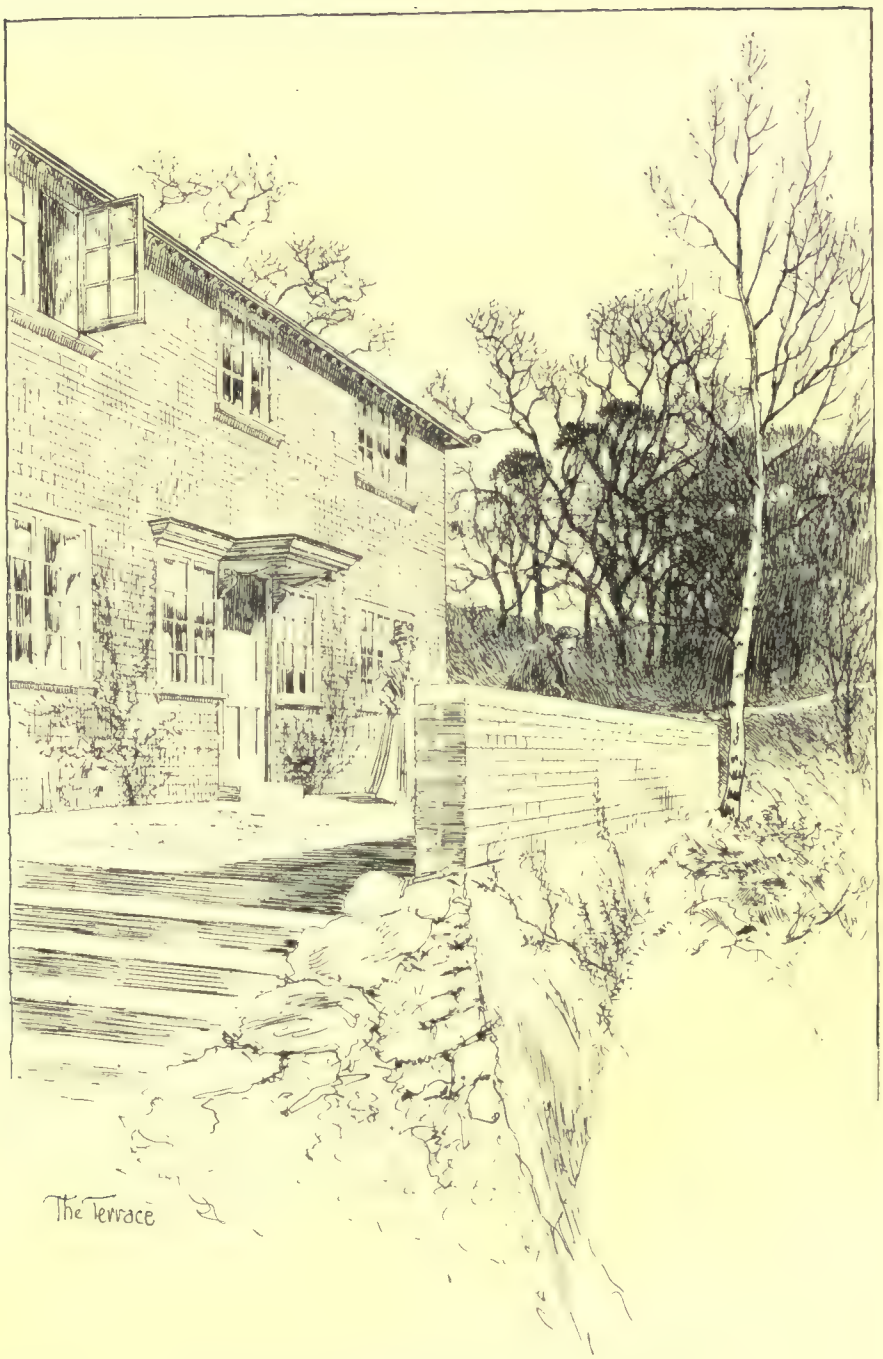


FIG. 68. ANDREWS WOOD: MERVYN E. MACARTNEY, ARCHITECT

ANDREWS WOOD

IF the virtue of simplicity makes a special appeal to one, it is surely in such a subject as this small country home, nestling in the woodland which forms one of the boundaries of the beautiful common at Limpsfield, in Surrey. It commands a beautiful western prospect from its cosy perch on the hillside, and directly one sees the cottage it is apparent how charmingly it fits the site.

FIG. 69. ANDREWS WOOD

"Oh no; that's an old cottage," said a resident when we were inquiring our way to this recent example of cottage building by Mr. Mervyn Macartney. The roof of old tiles, combined with the simplicity of line and detail, evidently formed no items in the equipment of modern architectural effects in the eyes of our informant. But the fact that this charming little home looked as though it had been in homely possession of its site for a long time is a tribute to the success of the architect in following the genuine old type of building which

is associated with the locality. There are few who possess such a personal and intimate knowledge of old domestic architecture in Kent and Surrey as Mr. Macartney. To the uninitiated in architectural forms or to the careless practitioner who thinks little or nothing of the nice relations of solids and voids or a good outline of mass, or of the value of reticence, there would be little appeal in such a work; for, after all, a small house with a door in the middle and windows at each side is such an ordinary subject that its possibility of being in any way distinguished does not occur to the average person. Such a very simple theme is, however, seldom carried out with the quality which is apparent to the lover of really nice work as seen in this Limpsfield cottage.

FIG. 70. ANDREWS WOOD

The site has been taken advantage of to base the building upon a high terrace fronted by a low brick wall, and approached from its northern end by a broad flight of winding steps (see Fig. 69). From every point of view whence the cottage can be seen with its brick terrace ensconced on the hillside the effect is excellent, and some of our illustrations suggest this. The view along the terrace, with its quaint cobble-stone paving in geometrical pattern, forms an architectural foreground to the wood beyond, through which are seen the levelled lawn and winding paths, and makes quite a charming picture (see Fig. 70). The back view of the house from the woodland above shows a quaint dormer window high in the roof, and is quite as pleasing in its way as the front. It will be noticed that the dining-room and hall have a direct outlook to the west, whilst the drawing-room has, besides, two windows towards the south looking through the trees to the lawn (see Fig. 71). Continuing along from the terrace we find a pathway skirting round the steeply-sloping ground which surrounds

the tennis lawn (see Fig. 68), and all sorts of pleasant woodland gardening is projected in and about these slopes and the woodland foliage below. The general plan indicates the garden, which is being

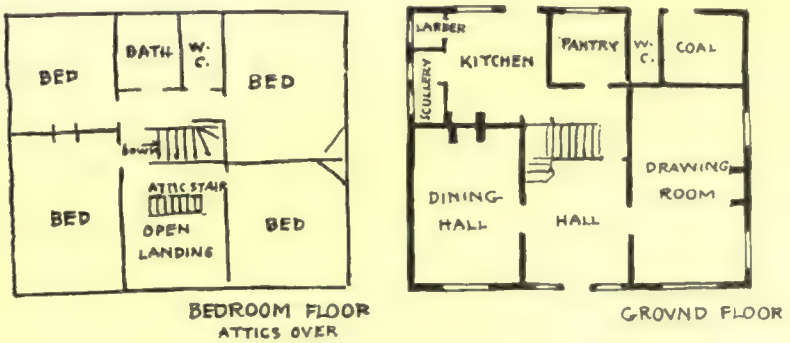


FIG. 71.

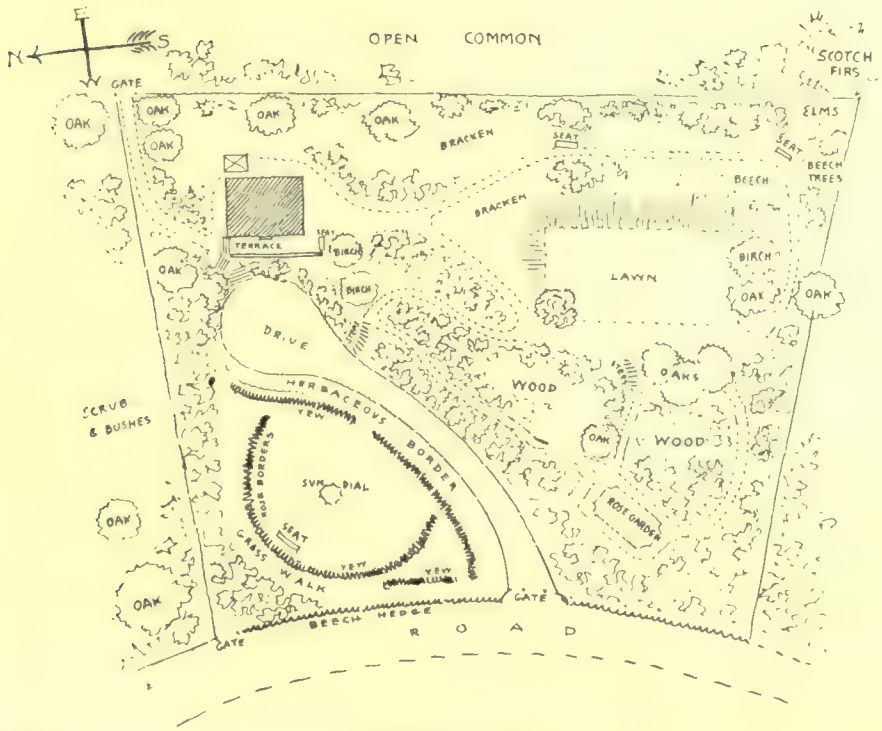


FIG. 72. ANDREWS WOOD

developed on the western and northern sides of the entrance drive (see Fig. 72). This piece of formal gardening will form an excellent feature between the drive and the meadow beyond, and will add much to the effect as one approaches the cottage. Altogether the position,

aspect, and surroundings are delightful, and promise, when the gardening operations are complete, to give a very admirable environment, such as will make the whole quite an ideal place of its kind.

Of course, in such a home as this one does not look for any

FIG. 73. ANDREWS WOOD

elaborate interior structural adornment. The hall is paved with red tiles, and the balustered stair enclosure forms a pleasant feature as one enters (see Fig. 73). A splendid piece of Grinling Gibbons carving adorns the wall, and beautiful old chairs, etc., convey a hint of the wealth of fine old furniture which abounds in the interior generally. The drawing-room is a good example of what beautiful furniture will

do for a quite simple square room (see Fig. 74). The fireplace is fitted with one of the admirable "heaped" fires by Bratt, Colbran and Co., which combines almost the perfection of simplicity and cleanliness with most effective heating power.

An indication of the fireplace in the dining-room is shown in the sketch (see Fig. 75); it is panelled round and above in oak. A house filled with fine old furniture such as is found here does not seem to call for much in the way of architectural features, and walls covered with simple wood-panelling or tapestry provide the best sort of background.

FIG. 74. ANDREWS WOOD

Where beautiful old cabinets, sideboards, chests, and chairs are abundant enough to furnish every bit of wall-space, any elaborate schemes of dado, filling, and frieze are not only unnecessary but likely to be disturbing. If we study the matter carefully we find that effects of size and breadth are to be obtained in even quite small houses. I have seen a great hall by Norman Shaw furnished with such a mass of bric-à-brac adornment that the contrast between this and its fine proportions and strong, simple lines was most painful. The owner must have thought that the more he crowded stuff into it the better it would look; but, as a matter of fact, it looked more like a Tottenham Court Road showroom than the great hall of an English country home. Every one will have

noticed that the more emphatic we make the division of walls and ceiling the smaller we make a room appear, as to its length, breadth, and height. This is only one instance of many of which the architect learns to estimate the value. Though we may have low rooms such as these at Andrews Wood—about 8 feet 6 inches—if we put a six foot oak panelling round and let the colour of frieze and ceiling merge into each other, with no arbitrary emphasis, we shall find the impression of height quite different from that in a room where a darker wall surface ends at the ceiling with a dark moulded cornice. Thus, ornament on a ceiling done all in white plaster has a very different value from the same thing picked out in colours. It is such facts as these that make an architect very careful how he multiplies detail and adds colour to a small building.

FIG. 75. ANDREWS WOOD

This Andrews Wood cottage is interesting to contemplate as a possibility for thousands of folk who either by choice or neglect live in the worst type of English homes, marked by the banality which has characterized most modern buildings since the end of the eighteenth century. No one can pretend that it is impossible to afford good proportion; no one can pretend that the commonest type of builder's building is cheaper in design than such a pleasant home as that which is here illustrated. It is perhaps safe to say that most folk would begrudge the proper architect's fee for doing such delightfully simple work. We are all mightily put out if a note or two of music goes wrong, but we know not, or care not, whether we have good proportions in the buildings which we have to look at all our lives. All the speculative builder

needs to do is to trick up his buildings with showy features and hideous gewgaws of ornament, and they are readily taken by a careless or ignorant public. We know all sorts of distinguished people living in the most appalling houses, who do not mind that at all, but would be sincerely horrified if they could be accused of indifference to the niceties and refinements of good music or good literature. And yet it seems nearly hopeless to overcome this indifference.

FIG. 76. ANDREWS WOOD

There is perhaps some hope when a capable architect gains the confidence of a speculative builder of the better sort, who is willing to pay something for a higher type of work, for the public dearly like to see a house completed before they buy it. If, then, they are provided with sufficient examples of a better quality, there is just a chance that they may tumble into the occupation of an artistic home. The most distinguished of our architects have given thought to the creation of art on a simple scale and at moderate cost, and the abler they are the better do they realize how keen a pleasure it is to evolve good art out of the simplest materials.

GILHAM'S BIRCH

THIS charming roadside cottage is within a mile of that unlovely spot known as Jarvis' Brook and Crowborough Station. But for its quaint stone gateway, set within the high hedge banks, the casual traveller would hardly note its existence (see Fig. 77). Yet for all its unobtrusive position it has a site which is singularly pleasant and attractive, and commands beautiful views. The garden terrace stands high above the wooded valley, and the tennis lawn and garden ground are well secured from observation, though they lie so near to the road.

A good opportunity is afforded the architect when the entrance to a house is from a steeply sloping road between high banks, and Mr. E. J. May, the architect of Gilham's Birch, has made the most of it. The stone piers carry a little tiled roof and a quaint oak gate crosses the lower half of the opening. A straight path some thirty paces long leads

FIG. 77. GILHAM'S BIRCH: E. J. MAY, ARCHITECT

direct up to the front door, and it is bordered at either side by dry stone walls about breast high, above which are narrow flower borders, and behind these are yew hedges. These are again backed by a hedge-row of holly, quick, bramble, gorse, etc., interspersed with higher trees. The path is flagged with irregular stone blocks and the brown stone walls are full of free-growing rock plants (see Fig. 78). It may easily be understood how effective a setting all this is to the quaint red-tiled

cottage beyond, and also what variety of colour effects may so be obtained by the varied nature of the planting.

The rock plants, of course, provide a good deal of beautiful colour, and then above them we have the narrow flower borders for various effects, separated by a dark yew hedge from the tall foxgloves or hollyhocks which appear between them and the upper hedge. In both

FIG. 78. GILHAM'S BIRCH

directions the effect of this paved footway or "twitten" is delightful; and is especially good as seen looking out from the house towards the road.

Though the main building is picturesque, it is fairly symmetrical in each main front. The tiles and bricks are chosen with excellent results of texture and colour. The chimneys are an agreeable departure from the ordinary types.

The open porch with oak posts and lintel, on which are carved the initials and crest of the owner, Sir Lindsay Hogg, comes under the angle of the right hand gable. Turning to the right and going through the pergola and down the steps to the tennis lawn, we have the view, shown in another sketch, which illustrates the pleasing mass and outline produced from this end (see Fig. 79).

The garden front, seen from the steeply sloping meadow below the terrace, is shown in another sketch (see Fig. 80), and embodies the traditional cottage feature of arched brackets across a central recess.

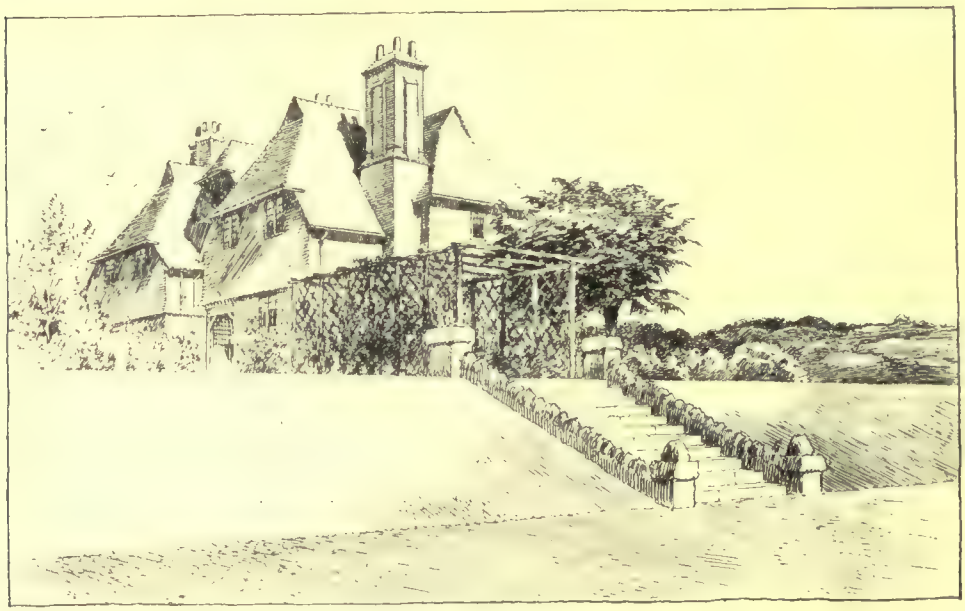


FIG. 79. GILHAM'S BIRCH

An interesting feature of the interior is the ingle-nook in the hall, which is framed within the old stone jambs and oak lintel from an earlier building which stood here. The stone jamb is deeply scooped out from the frequent sharpening of smugglers' knives—so they say, for this was a hot-bed of smugglers once. The architect has given in this hall quite the feeling of an old cottage fireplace with the raised hearth and the window recess and seat (see Fig. 81). It is charmingly furnished with nice old furniture and brasswork. Opening from the hall is a brick paved recess in the centre of the garden front, with steps down to the terrace. The walls of the hall place are covered with

FIG. 80.

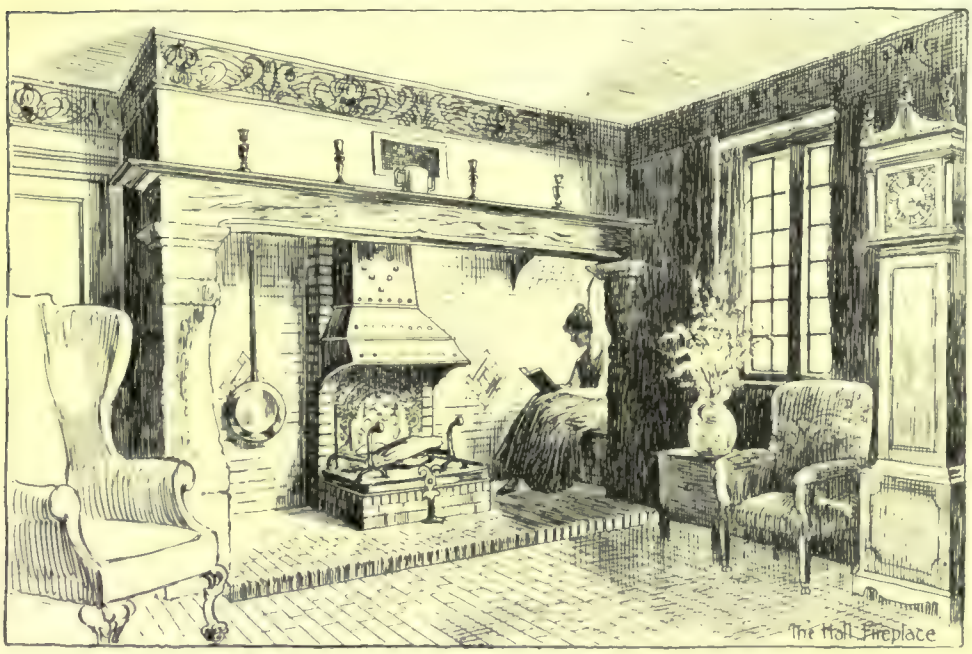


FIG. 81. GILHAM'S BIRCH

brown paper with a narrow decorated paper frieze, and the woodwork is painted white; the floor is paved with red tiles. The other rooms are finished without wall decoration, the dining-room having whitewashed walls and the drawing room a plain green paper. In every respect an effort has been made to produce simple and restful results. There is a cosy little smoking parlour, so there are practically four sitting rooms within a comparatively small compass. In place of this there might have been a dining-room and one very good sized hall parlour, but there can be little doubt the plan here adopted is the most popular in this country.

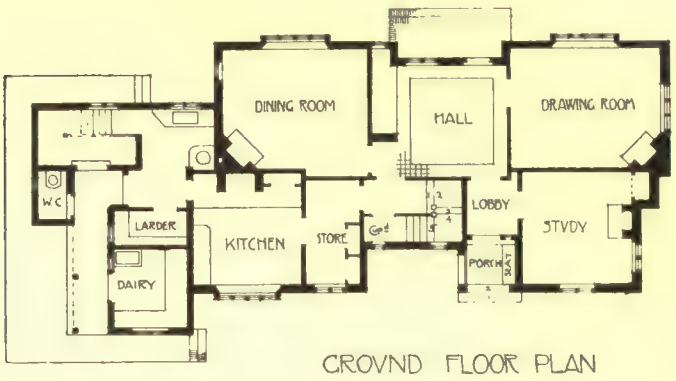


FIG. 82. GILHAM'S BIRCH

The making of a small house very much on the scheme of a large one necessitates small rooms, and, one would argue, not quite the best sanitary conditions. Yet there is good enough reason for a plan which provides: first, a room for meals; second, a general sitting-room, such as a hall parlour; third, a drawing-room or ladies' room; fourth, a smoking-room, or library, or men's room.

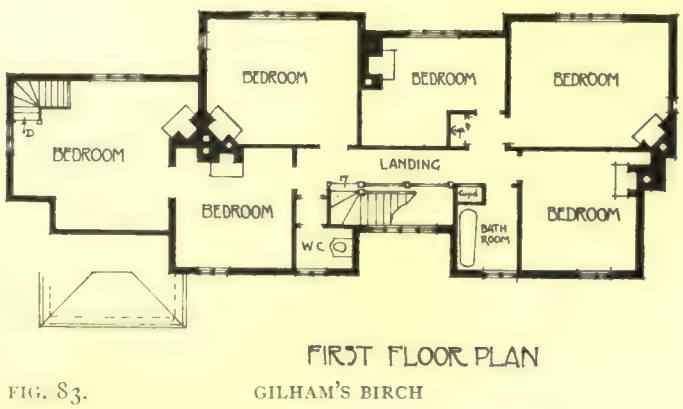


FIG. 83. GILHAM'S BIRCH

These are divisions of a home which every good housewife, no doubt, desires, and in Gilham's Birch they are contrived as cleverly as may be (see Figs. 82 and 83).

The Elizabethan period, with its lack of privacy, does not present an ideal to the modern householder, and as a matter of fact the com-

paratively small house of to-day is often enough required to accommodate a class of people who in their culture of mind and desire for comfort had no counterpart in the Middle Ages, for then there existed no such middle-class. There is, of course, a numerous class of people to-day who, with little money to spend, still desire to live in very much of the style and comfort of even the wealthiest classes, and rather than forgo this they are willing to do it all within very small compass. It must be admitted that the best of our present-day architects have enabled this desire to find a reasonable measure of fulfilment, and it is to be feared that the chief result of the development of the hall-parlour has been to create an ambition to possess it in addition to the two or three other rooms usually provided. In few cases does a large hall-parlour appear to satisfy or make up for the absence of a parlour or a smoking room, though architects have certainly done their best to encourage its adoption.

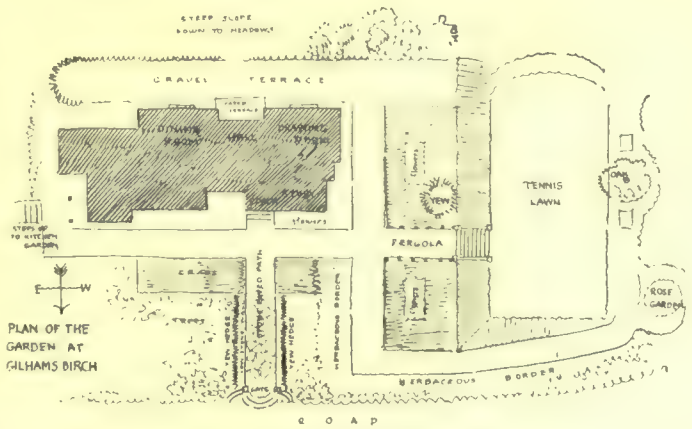


FIG. 84. GILHAM'S BIRCH

If my readers were to compare Gilham's Birch with many of the large country houses of which Mr. May has built so many, they would find that he has managed to encompass, within very small areas, much of the feeling of comfort and pleasure of the large country house. Even the few illustrations here given will indicate that a genuine architectural interest may be created in a very simple and unpretentious subject.

The name Gilham's Birch appears to be a corruption of William's Birch, and the William referred to is William the Conqueror. It is certainly a long descent, but we cannot now look upon a birch which was familiar to the great William, for birches do not form a feature of the site.

NETHERHEYS

THE plan of Netherheys illustrates very well what can be done in a comparatively small house to provide the comfort and variety usually associated with a much larger scheme. We should need only to enlarge the dimensions of the various apartments, and add some-

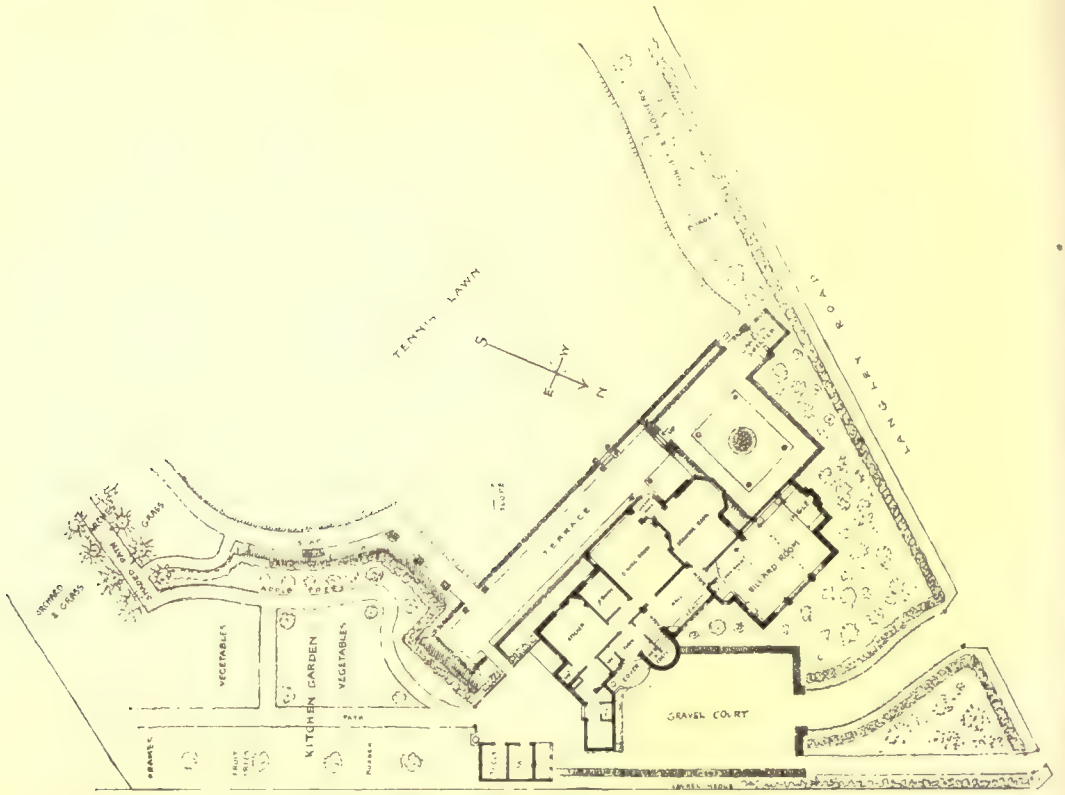


FIG. 85. NETHERHEYS: W. WALLIS BALDWIN, ARCHITECT

thing in the way of domestic offices, to produce a good design for quite a large house. The plan has been very carefully considered in all points of domestic economy (see Fig. 85). The entrance doorway is provided with a cover for waiting visitors, a thing which should be aimed for whenever possible. A small vestibule paved with marble, with gentlemen's lavatory and cloak space leading out of it, is enclosed

by a doorway from the inner hall. The service from the kitchen to the front door is direct, without traversing the hall. The staircase has its own separate enclosure, and projects from the main building in the form of a tourelle (see Fig. 86), with conical roof. The stairs go up between the vestibule door and the curtained arch leading into the hall, which adds to the comfort and privacy of both. The hall provides a pleasant little sitting space, and forms an agreeable lounge for visitors calling, or for after-dinner use (see Fig. 87). The dining-room, drawing-room, and billiard-room are all entered from the hall, and the dining-room and drawing-room have intercommunication through a garden porch, which provides also ready access to the terrace from either room.

FIG. 86. NETHERHEYS

FIG. 87. NETHERHEYS

As would be expected in a house of this size, the drawing-room (see Fig. 88) is more of a boudoir, for ladies' use as the billiard-room is considerably larger than needed for the table, and forms a pleasant apartment (see Fig. 89). It is provided with two or three recesses, besides a comfortable and nicely-proportioned ingle-nook. This ingle-nook is a pleasing feature, with its broadly-treated oak mantel and fixed lounge seats at either side. The fireplace is fitted with the largest size of Bratt Colbran's admirable heaped firegrates. The recess at the other end of the room has a fireplace and fixed window-seat.

A good feature in the house is the angle formed by the exterior of the walls of drawing-room and billiard-room. In this sunny corner is a dainty bit of flower garden, pleasant to look upon from both rooms. The service from the kitchen to the dining-room is well planned.

FIG. 88. NETHERHEYS

The circular staircase, opening out to a wide landing, comes well on the upper floor, and there is a capital arrangement of fixed wardrobes, etc., in the principal bedroom.

Great variations of treatment are, of course, possible with the elevational effect from such a plan by varying proportions, and varying arrangements of recesses and windows; but

FIG. 89. NETHERHEYS

Netherheys as it stands is probably one of the most comfortable and pleasing types of small houses which have been done in recent years. The site is a particularly good one, neither overlooking others nor with a possibility of being itself overlooked. The garden front

FIG. 90.

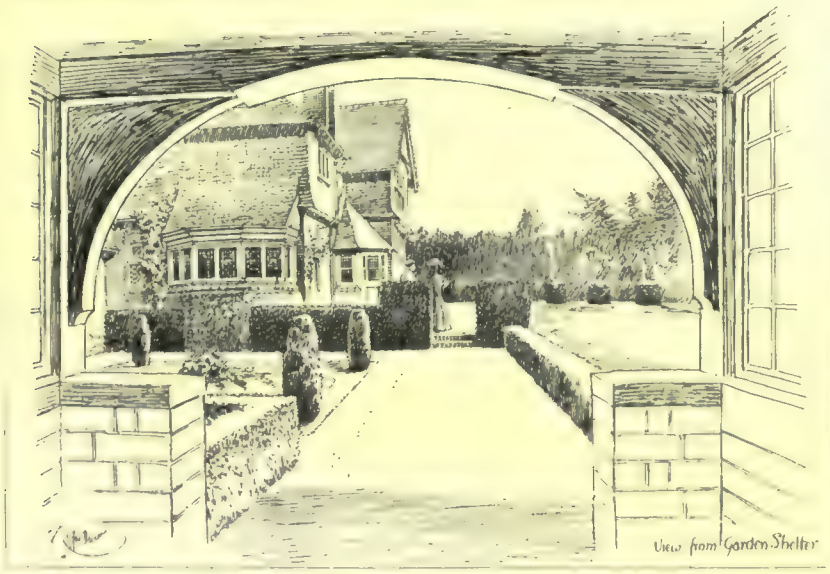


FIG. 91. NETHERHEYS

(see Fig. 90) faces the beautiful woodland of Cassiobury Park at Watford.

The garden is laid out with care and skill, though with no great amount of formality. The terrace leads up to a solidly-built garden shelter (see Figs. 91 and 92), which composes very happily as a picture with the main building.

FIG. 92. NETHERHEYS

Oddly proportioned and quaintly arranged plans generally leave something to be desired from the point of view of comfort and convenience in use, and those who aim for such results must always bear that in mind. I remember some years ago congratulating an old lady on her beautiful little home—one of a

FIG. 93. NETHERHEYS

series of picturesque almshouses. "Ah!" she said, "these outside chimneys leave a place terrible cold." Then I noted that a projecting ingle-nook perhaps gave more pleasure to the architect than to the infirm old folk who had to sit in it. Compactly planned houses with

plenty of chimneys on the inner walls instead of the outer, well-screened entrances, avoidance of through draughts, and good enclosure of staircases are amongst the things that tell in small houses. There was much sound sense in the contention of a client to me that it was better not to think of the staircase at all until your rooms were planned as you wanted them, in their due relation, right aspect, etc., afterwards putting the staircase where it comes best.

"You architects," he said, "make too much fuss about your staircase. You begin with the staircase and fit in your rooms round it as well as you can; it forms a blot on the whole scheme, and destroys the comfort of everything!"

FIG. 94. NETHERHEYS

It may well be that if architects more often designed staircases in turrets something like this at Netherheys the resultant plans would be more comfortable and perhaps more compact. Capital plans have been evolved by working them round one central chimney stack, which should take all the flues, though that is possible only in small houses. If the staircase, bath, and conveniences were all arranged together in a tower or gabled projection from the main building, comfort, economy, and artistic effect would often result.

A satisfactory feature about this home is that much of the furniture was designed by the architect. My illustration of the dining-room (see Fig. 93) shows some of the furniture therein, which is admirably executed in oak. The dado panelling and the frieze in this room, as well as all the woodwork to ceiling, doors, and windows, are in oak. The characteristic entrance gates (Fig. 94) were also designed by the architect. The general plan illustrates the excellent manner in which house and garden have been arranged on the site (see Fig. 85).

THE WHITE COTTAGE, HARROW

IT would hardly be possible to show a better attempt to reform our current methods of design and building than The White Cottage at Harrow, which is a whole-hearted endeavour to get back to fundamental honesty and simplicity, both in the design of a building and its construction. It is such an attempt as is rarely possible for an archi-

FIG. 95. THE WHITE COTTAGE, HARROW: M. H. BAILLIE SCOTT, ARCHITECT

tect to make, owing to the difficulty of getting clients who will believe in the value of it.

In his recent book on houses, Mr. Baillie Scott, the architect of The White Cottage, has very emphatically stated his own beliefs, and has shown how vitally interesting modern work may become if it is carried out in a spirit of honest simplicity, with a determination to give a straightforward expression to our needs, and an earnest endeavour to treat building materials in an appropriate and natural manner. It is true that the subjects he has illustrated are mainly those in which any sort of display would be obviously out of place, but from his remarks it may be also gathered that he would have little sympathy with

any scheme which called for anything which we understand as swagger or bounce. The chief message in his book was a showing of the falsity which is so prevalent in house-building, causing the cottage to ape the small villa, the small villa the large one, and the large villa the big country house; substituting generally the requirements of a luxurious class of building for that which would be more appropriate, if simpler.

I have mentioned elsewhere the special demand in the present day by a large class who desire the comfort and something of the luxury which all people of refined taste enjoy, but who nevertheless have very small means with which to obtain these requirements. For all these it is important to point out that their only hope of success in house-building lies in a rigid determination to accept simple conditions and genuine honesty of purpose, both in the design and in its carrying out.

FIG. 96. THE WHITE COTTAGE. ENTRANCE COURT LOOKING TOWARDS ROAD

Most people desire large rooms, but those to whom I refer cannot afford them, although the adoption of the hall parlour, or of one large room with quite small adjuncts will give the luxury of space with out undue cost, but we cannot possibly obtain the large parlour and a number of other rooms of large size as well if we are to limit the cost to suit this class of house-builder. By combining the space usually reserved for dining, for music, for reading, and for receiving one's friends we may produce within the limits of a cottage the luxury of an apartment such as is usually found only in quite large houses.

The White Cottage is the most recent attempt to carry out in actual work the principles which Mr. Baillie Scott has long and ably

advocated, and some of my readers will no doubt be interested in the record of it here placed before them.

I am quite aware how difficult it is to realize the quality of a house from any written or illustrated account of it; photographs cannot give the air of space and freshness, or the charm of colour which the architect has implanted in this delightful little cottage, though they may

FIG. 97. THE WHITE COTTAGE. ENTRANCE COURT

explain something of its detail. The first sight of a house should impress one with something of its quality, and the sketch of The White Cottage from the road, as one sees it for the first time, nestling behind the long old wall, with its environment of trees, is full of rest and charm (see Fig. 95). The site is on Sudbury Hill, near Harrow, and is quite a small piece of ground. It lies between two conventual establishments and has a good surrounding of trees.

Whatever plan may be decided upon for a house, one should, of

course, take special account of local features, and here Mr. Baillie Scott, finding a picturesque old tree at the front of the site, constructed a red tiled entrance court around it. The effect of a court is very well obtained, for we have the low building on the right, coming well forward, with a recessed portion for the front door at right angles thereto, and the wall along the roadside behind us (see Fig. 97). At the end of the straight

FIG. 98. THE WHITE COTTAGE. VESTIBULE

path from the gate is a little domed canopy of foliage, built up with square oak posts supporting bent arches of wood. The old tree is in the centre of the court, with a brick-paved pathway round it (see Fig. 96).

The stairs rise from the vestibule with quaint newels and cut balusters (see Fig. 98), and when we enter we find ourselves at once in quite a large apartment, which would be surprising to the ordinary visitor in so apparently small a building. This is secured by having the

FIG. 99. LOOKING TOWARDS MUSIC RECESS

FIG. 100. THE WHITE COTTAGE. LOOKING TOWARDS DINING RECESS

living-room space lengthened out at one end by a music recess (see Fig. 99), and at the other by a dining recess (see Fig. 100). If this were all the accommodation one could hardly complain of lack of space, but in addition there is a cosy parlour opening out of it (see Fig. 101), which may be a reception room, a library, or a boudoir, and there is also a small room, entered from the vestibule, which may be used as a children's room, a smoking-room, or a study (see Fig. 102). In the large room is a long window, with a window seat, looking out on to the terrace.

FIG. 101. THE WHITE COTTAGE

The wide fireplace opening is supported by an oak beam, and oak beams cross the ceiling. The room has a dado of wide elm boards, and the walls above it are of brickwork covered with whitewash. The dining recess is fitted with fixed seating round the table. The music recess at the other end is raised two steps above the general level, and here, above the boarded dado, the walls are hung with a soft green silk. Mauve curtains of a blanket texture are hung to the dining recess and to the entrance doors, thus affording a pleasant touch of colour. When the door from this recess to the garden terrace room is open, a pleasant gleam of light is shown through from the garden, and the whole effect of

light and colour throughout the apartment is delightful, and its simple, unaffected naturalness of treatment is charming, breathing the freshness of nature and the open air. The wood is left in its natural colour, and is not dressed up out of all look of wood. One feels that the place is built in genuinely honest fashion: cheerfulness and a homely simplicity are the keynotes of the whole design. It is realized at once that the paramount idea of the house is to form a large interior space

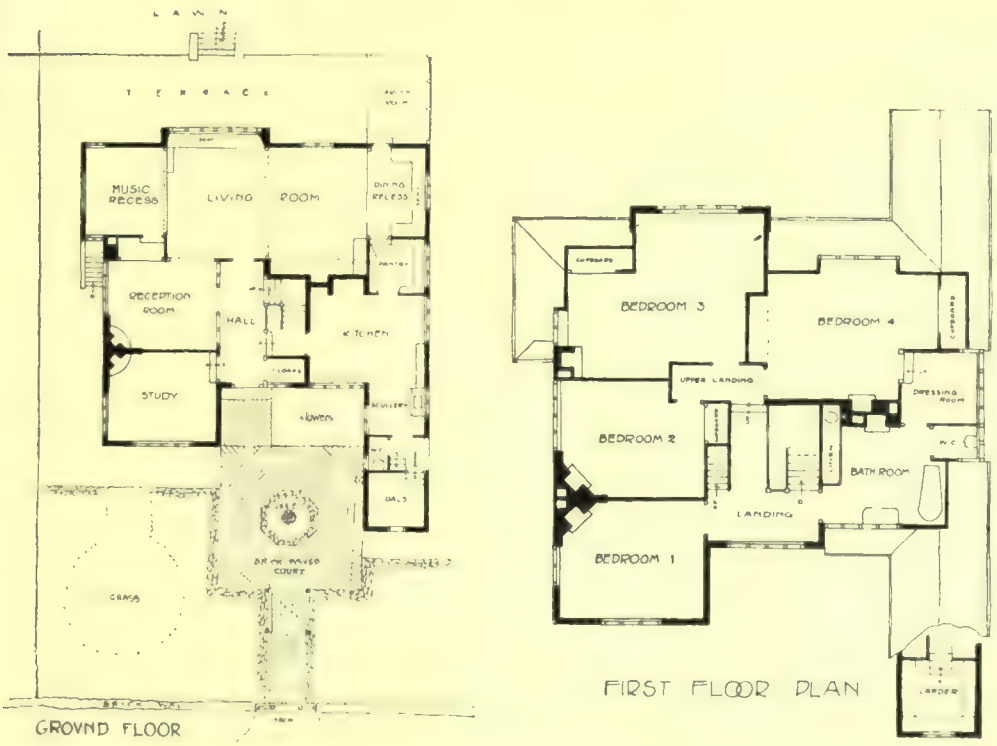
FIG. 102. THE WHITE COTTAGE

where requirements of privacy do not demand absolute isolation, apartments only being completely isolated where it is really necessary. Apart from the artistic possibilities of this method, it is both practical and economical in reducing the number of fires. The music and dining recesses, not posing as isolated rooms, may be made small without cramping the general spaciousness of effect, and while so often indoor effects have an element of frowsiness about them, this one charms with its spaciousness and simplicity (see Fig. 103).

It should be noted that the small room near the stage or music

recess serves as an artistic little apartment from which performers may make their entry and exit. On the upper floor plan, the arrangement of the bathroom is such that it becomes a part of the private suite (see Fig. 104).

To those who have been accustomed to the conventions of the Victorian period all this seems perhaps at first sight odd and difficult to believe in. Gilded wall-papers, painted ceilings, heavily curtained



FIGS. 103 AND 104. THE WHITE COTTAGE

windows, thickly carpeted floors, crowds of useless furniture, and multitudes of so-called ornaments have filled the eye so long that a plain, quiet wall space, natural wood construction, plenty of room, furniture only for use, ornaments which really adorn, good colour effects and over all a general air of repose, are difficult to understand. The aim for so long has been to produce rooms that are stuffy and reek of artificiality, that we cannot, perhaps, expect folk to endure the strong air of honesty and simplicity all at once. Those who feel the realities of artistic beliefs, however, are more inclined to wonder why everybody does not

fly at once, and for ever, from the falsities of the past hundred years in house design into a newer and a better way.

One thing which ought to lead to better results should be the determination to treat materials in a natural and suitable manner; to dress, cut, and carve wood in a wooden manner, to make metal look like metal, and stone like stone. As Mr. Baillie Scott has well said, "all building is in one sense an education of materials—education of their special qualities—wood to be woodeny, brass to be brassy, and so on. This can only be done by hard work and by tools. The plane is not a true tool, but a machine, effacing character rather than educing it. Wood should be finished with an adze or chisel, and this does not necessarily imply roughness. Even a picture may be painted on an adzed frame. The 'chippiness' of surface tells of the quality of wood as a chippable material, and gives a subtle variation of surface instead of a dead and stupid level."

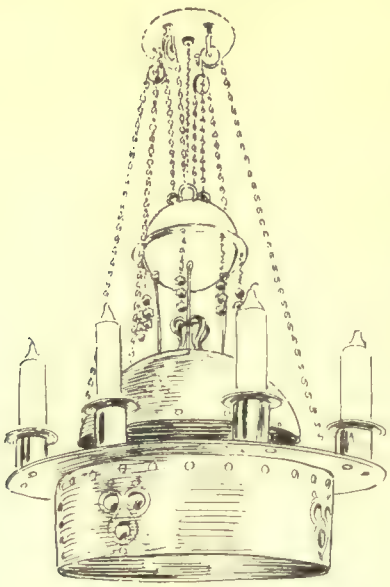


FIG. 105. THE WHITE COTTAGE.
A HANGING LAMP

It would certainly create a new spirit in building if architects were to drop a good deal of their stock-in-trade, the stuck-on-pilasters and cornices and all sorts of features that mean nothing and do nothing, and aim more for a directness and simplicity of design, making the utmost use of their materials in a manner always appropriate to them.

HIGHLANDS

THE conditions which have governed the general development of plan in any particular English home must, of course, be taken into account in estimating the success of a design. If we realize that for the greater part of the year the object in this country is to obtain full protection against the weather, we understand how strong a prejudice has existed against large window spaces, and how verandas,

balconies, and belvederes have come to be regarded rather as luxuries, or purely ornamental features, forming no essential adjuncts to a good building plan. But now that the benefits of fresh air are more fully

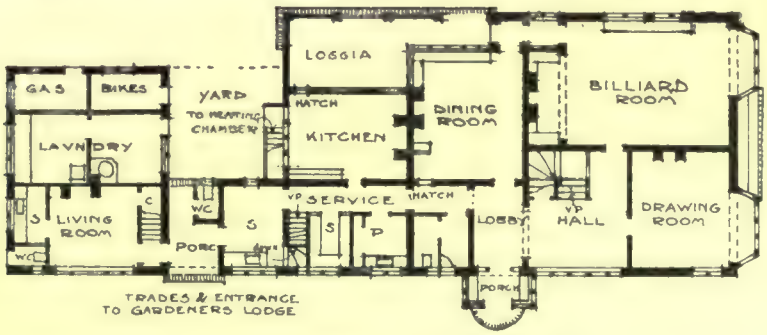


FIG. 106.

realized, and the new treatment of consumption has made the constant breathing of fresh air a vital matter, one may expect a fuller development in the provision of features like verandas, which have been more par-

FIG. 107. HIGHLANDS: H. C. TRIMNELL, ARCHITECT

ticularly associated with the usages of a hot climate. Now that so many delicate people sleep with windows wide open at night in all kinds of weather, spending hours in deck chairs or hammocks, on balconies or verandas, the architect may find more opportunity for variety in treatment of his building.

Highlands, the subject of this notice, is a house in which the loggia becomes a feature of the integral economy of the plan (see Fig. 106), and it performs the twofold service of enhancing the effect of the exterior design and of adding to the practical value of the house. This loggia is so placed that it comes into continuous line with the front of the billiard-room, with which it forms an interior vista of some twenty-five paces, while it also forms a partial veranda to the dining-room, which is set slightly back within it. The billiard-room and the dining-room have each separate access to it and it is provided with a service hatch through to the kitchen. It is thus not only a pleasant lounge

FIG. 108. HIGHLANDS

with a charming outlook and free blow of fresh air, but it is sufficiently sheltered as well as large enough to provide a very excellent place for meals in fine weather. By the provision of sliding casements it becomes practically an additional room, and when so fitted for the winter months, it forms a continuously useful apartment throughout the year. The illustrations explain how happily it comes into the design (see Figs. 107 and 108) and how well its position in the plan scheme has been chosen.

The relative size of rooms in the plan of Highlands has much to commend it, for, instead of a large space being relegated to a drawing-room, which is little used, the drawing-room becomes more of a boudoir, and the billiard-room, with its ample ingle-nook at one end

(see Fig. 109) and writing-table space at the other, becomes the real living room of the house, the dining-room being just large enough as a place to take meals in. The general disposition of plan, with a fairly roomy hall space, was the desire of the client, and is, therefore, the outcome of a definite and wise collaboration between architect and client. The kitchen service is well arranged at the southern side of the hall in good relation to the dining-room. The main staircase (see Fig. 110)

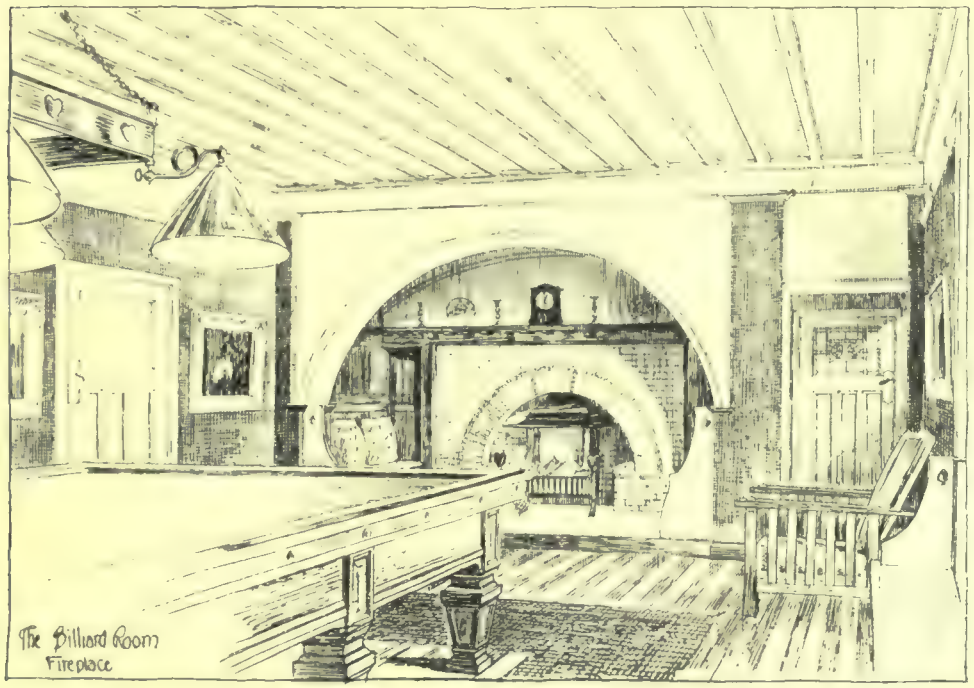


FIG. 109. HIGHLANDS

leads to a good gallery landing upstairs, crossed by segmental arches at either end (see Fig. 111).

Another feature of the plan to be noted is the grouping together of the gardener's cottage with the main house building, a covered porch connecting the two (see Fig. 112). This makes a good group of building, both on the entrance and the garden side, giving a long, continuous frontage. The small amount of brickwork used in the chimneys, doors, arches, etc., is of a purplish tone, relieved by red tile quoins and weatherings.

In most houses there will be found the difficulty of making the wall

covering of the rooms produce a good binding decorative effect unless the whole is executed in woodwork. The breaks in the wall surface caused by fireplaces, doors, windows, and furniture are so frequent and of such an amount that often enough the actual wall surface to be seen is really very small and of little importance and it is to the frieze and the ceiling that one must look for breadth of effect. A safe and pleasing method for these parts of the room is a plain white surface relieved with the flat ribs as at Highlands, the walls being treated in panels

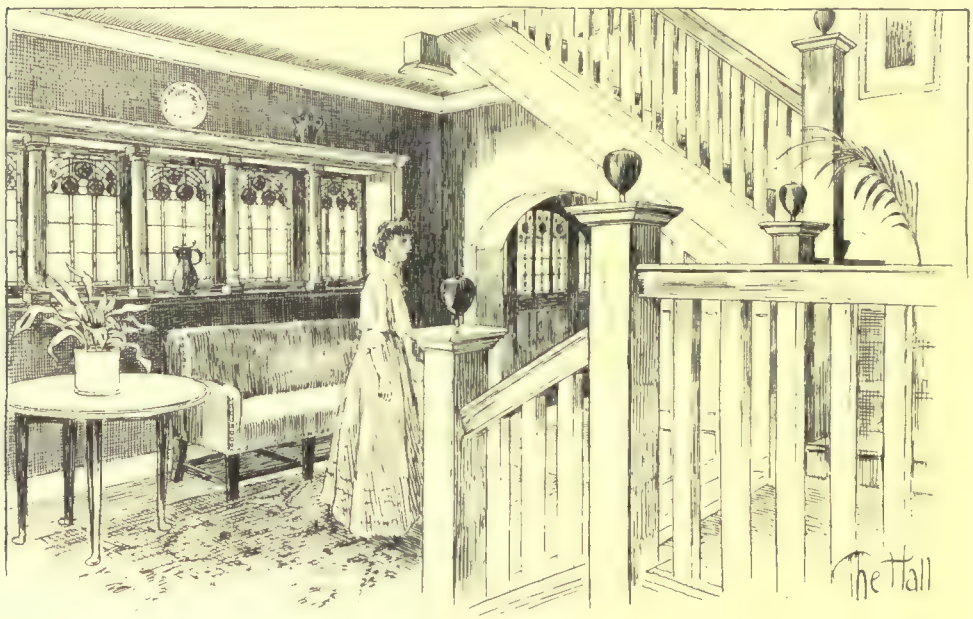


FIG. 110. HIGHLANDS

by flat battens and a canvas of good texture filling in between. When all the woodwork is finished in one colour this binds the whole well together, but it is advisable to fill the panels in soft tones of colour or they produce a restless and patchy effect. Of course, there are many instances, both in large and small rooms (but especially in large rooms), where the decorative effect of wall-paper may be excellent, and there is no lack of much delightful material on the market to-day. But there are doubtless a good many interiors spoilt by the attempt to produce a decorative result from wall decoration which is so broken up by constructional features, and by furniture and pictures,

as to destroy all quality of repose. It is quite obvious that if a decorative wall material can only be used on two sides of a room, and perhaps a portion of another, its value as a binding decoration is *nil*. Every apartment should have some good basis of colour or construc-

FIG. 111.

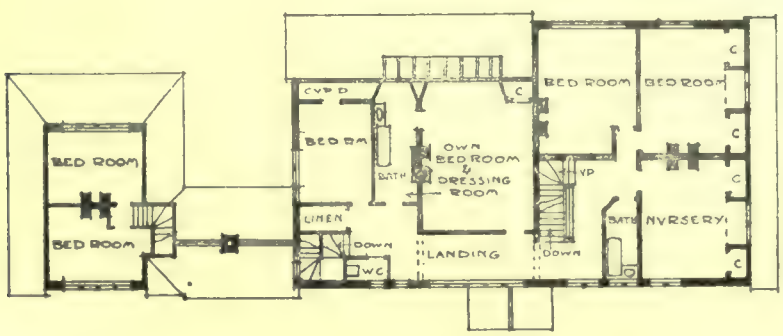


FIG. 112. HIGHLANDS. FIRST FLOOR PLAN

tive decoration as a binding quality which will produce a breadth of effect to the whole, and it is therefore desirable to treat the walls in such a way that there may be plenty of repetitive colour and material to answer that purpose. When fireplaces, mantels, doors, window framings, and wall battens are finished in a similar way there is some

chance of such a result, and the boudoir at Highlands is a good example of this breadth of effect, as the repetition of the green in the carpet, the wall panels, and the fireplace tiling emphasizes the white finish of all the rest—ceiling, frieze, doors, and framing of wall panels. Many interiors which might otherwise be excellent are spoilt by the effort to decorate walls which offer only intermittent and awkward spaces for the purpose.

It is to be feared that the average person does not realize the importance of the quiet breadth of background which is necessary to produce an effective picture of an interior. Decoratively it might be preferable to whitewash everything over rather than to have only here and there a few spaces of decoration appearing on the walls! The ideal way is probably to finish all our rooms in wood. We might except the ceiling, for I heard of a charming house the other day saved from destruction by fire through a fine plaster ceiling in the dining-room, where the fire originated. But few folk can have interiors of their houses finished in wood. We might have an oak dining-room, a cedar drawing-room, a bay-wood library, a green-wood bedroom, and when they were once panelled there they would be for all time with no more trouble, at intervals, of redecoration. But at first this is costly, even if it pays in the end.

The alternative to obtain breadth of effect is to get it by colour so repeated that our constructive features, such as fireplaces, doors, and windows do not form distractions from the general effect. Thus, a light tone of red on canvas or paper panels with a darker red paint which would include the framing of the panels, the doors, windows, fireplaces, and mantels, would produce a binding quality of effect of real value. This by no means excludes the use of beautiful wall papers, but it suggests a more careful and trained skill in the use of them. Many very beautiful papers which we find hung on the walls of rooms only form incidental features of quality, without contributing any real value to the comprehensive decorativeness of the apartments. It is, however, obvious that the decoration of walls in panels or whole surfaces in any strong colour presents a difficult problem where two sides of the room are taken up with ingle-nook and windows, where no wall decoration can appear. The whole subject of house decoration bristles with difficulties in the pursuit of real excellence which no supply of beautiful

materials can of itself solve. The architect can do much in the first instance to direct in the right way, but as houses are periodically re-decorated there inevitably comes a time when the whole aspect of a house is governed either by the decorative firm employed, or by the taste (or absence of it!) of the owner. So long as people have not enough wisdom to pay a small fee for sound advice as to interior decoration, the only hope for better things generally is the improvement of the standard of taste amongst house owners and the tradesmen they employ. As every home, however small and simple, may be decorated with good taste, the field for improvement is immense. Even if we had a tradition that all simple homes should show natural woodwork and whitewashed walls, we should have accomplished something!

THE FIVES COURT

THE distinctiveness which may be obtained by a special feature in the planning belongs to this carefully designed little country home. By the simple expedient of arranging two small wings containing coals and larder, etc., at the back of the kitchen block for the sides of The Fives Court, this unusual feature in a home of this size is economically and conveniently obtained. As will be seen from the garden view (Fig. 113), the effect in the elevation is quite pleasant. There is in the plan generally a most attentive thought to the convenience and comfort of a small house (see Figs. 114 and 115). The pantry is happily situated between the kitchen and the vestibule, so that it places the kitchen further apart from the entertaining rooms, and forms a most useful service place for the dining-room. It will be noted that though a space very similar to a passage comes between the lobby and the stairs, it has the effect of a vestibule, and has a wide opening to the hall. This opening, through which we descend by three steps, is made a quite uncommon and pleasing architectural feature. The two flanks of the opening are panelled, and from them are two projections forming permanent hall tables. The opening is crossed by two plaster beams, with a little semicircular plaster vault between (see

Fig. 116). It will be seen from the plan that the doors into the drawing-room and the dining-room are opposite this opening, so that we obtain a length of some forty feet clear view through the three apart-

FIG. 113. THE FIVES COURT: CECIL C. BREWER, ARCHITECT

FIG. 114. THE FIVES COURT

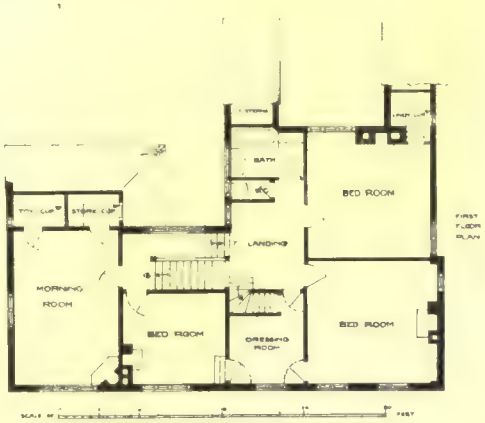


FIG. 115. THE FIVES COURT

ments. The drawing-room is eighteen feet long, and opens out on to a veranda, which could very easily be entered from it or incorporated with it. A good point of detail in this room is the treatment of the plaster beams with sloping sides, giving somewhat the effect, with the sloping

cornice, of three deeply coffered panels (see Fig. 117). The fireplace is in the angle, with blue-tiled sides, and recessed shelves above, and there is a raised tile hearth bordered by a copper curb. The dining-room has a comfortable aspect, and this agreeable proportion is partly due to the recessed portion over the fireplace side, which has the effect of a deep ingle-nook, an effect obtained through the ceiling being kept below the decorative plaster frieze which surrounds the rest of the room. The ceiling of the semicircular bay is also kept to the same level. This leaves the main ceiling practically a square, within which is a band of richly-modelled flower-ornament. There is no wall-paper in the room, only a slight tone of colour on the walls below the frieze. The fireplace is built up with tile hearth and hobs, and has a big solid oak lintel (see Fig. 118). As one would expect from the owner, the furniture and furnishing are very admirable, and illustrate what can be done by excellence of material and design in a very simple way. Needless to say, several delightful pieces of old furniture adorn the house. One other point of excellence is to be noted in the interior, and that is the very satisfactory way in which the stairs are arranged both as to their plan and decorative quality. There are no awkward soffits or angles anywhere, and quite a quaint effect has been obtained by means of the opening arch and the circular ramp of mouldings up from it on each side. I regret we have not a sketch to show this, for the matter of staircases is one in which so many mistakes are made, and good opportunity for nice results so often missed. The picturesque charms of an open staircase may be freely conceded, but there is much to be said for

FIG. 116. THE LIVES COURT

FIG. 117. THE DRAWING ROOM

FIG. 118. THE FIVES COURT. THE DINING ROOM

an enclosed stair like this. Even in a big house like Fishers Hill (which Mr. Lutyens built for Mr. Gerald Balfour) the effect of an enclosed stair may be most pleasing, enclosed as it there is by oak panelling. At The Fives Court one does not at first notice anything of the staircase at all, it being entered through a circular arched opening at the end of the vestibule.

Again referring to the plans, it will be seen that a lavatory is placed conveniently near the garden door. Upstairs we find a pleasant landing, and the rooms include a delightful morning-room, or day-nursery, with an angle fireplace and quaint wall-paper, the only place in the house where wall-paper occurs.

FIG. 119. THE FIVES COURT. ENTRANCE

The sketches explain the exterior effect of The Fives Court, which is entirely simple and unpretentious (see Fig. 119); the entrance-door is quite excellent in its charmingly simple treatment (see Fig. 120).

We may suppose that in the eye of the average householder there is little to choose between the appearance of this house and the thousands of nonentities which are springing up like mushrooms everywhere. But it is pleasant to know that if people do care for an artistic and pleasant home they can get it. Sometimes one is tempted to wonder how it is that those who *can* build houses like this are not done to death with having so much to do! But soon we are confronted afresh with the fact that most people do not seem to know good art when they get it, and the rest do not make much effort to obtain it. You may meet with thousands of folk who have an instinct for good music and are horribly troubled if a

single note goes wrong, but seldom, or perhaps never, do we meet a layman who suffers a moment's pang through any trouble of bad proportion or vulgar display in architecture. The line between the good and the meretricious in architecture is not drawn across the

FIG. 120. THE FIVES COURT

vision of the public. The client who employed Mr. Cecil Brewer to build The Fives Court, and who had the taste and knowledge to equip and furnish it so well that no big house on which thousands are spent could be better, in his way is, after all, a comparatively rare individual. And this we say after making all due allowance for the supposed spread of artistic culture.

HEATHER COTTAGE

THE provision of a large hall-parlour in a comparatively small home is not often attempted, but it would seem that greater satisfaction and pleasure may be derived from such a house than from one which contains three or even four small entertaining rooms. If this large room extends through two stories in height, as well as over the

area of two or three ordinary rooms, we obtain an apartment such as is usually found only in quite large houses. The picturesque little Heather Cottage, here illustrated, is a case of this kind, and it ap-

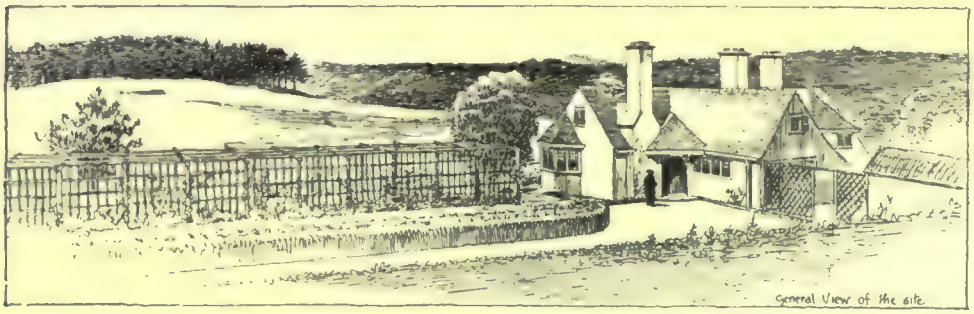


FIG. 121. HEATHER COTTAGE

pears almost incredible on a first sight that it should contain anything but quite small rooms. It is as satisfying an example of the large hall-parlour plan as can be found in recent work, and it is one of the most successful houses of an architect who has earned a wide reputation for unusual and characteristic design.

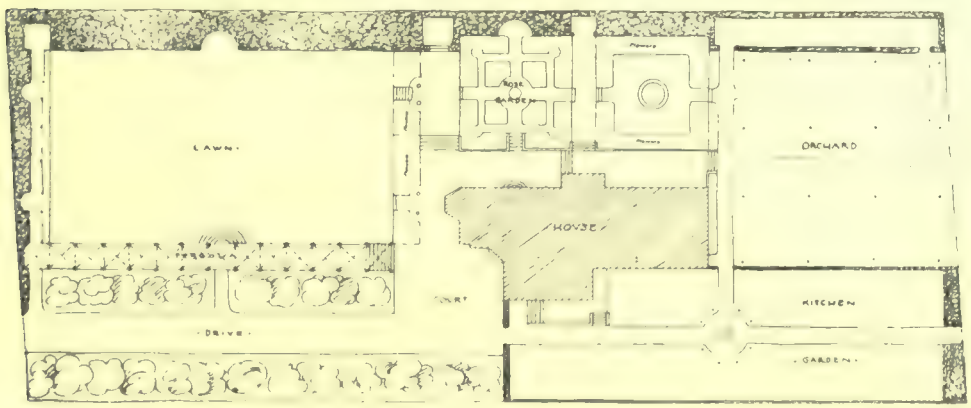


FIG. 122. HEATHER COTTAGE (SITE PLAN): M. H. BAILLIE SCOTT, ARCHITECT

The best utilization of a site, both from a practical and artistic point of view, is not so easy a matter as it seems to the uninitiated. It often appears that the treatment of a site is so obviously the best that it would hardly have been possible to treat it in any other way. But such examples are often the result of most careful thought and the knowledge gained from long experience. At all events, the obvious

blunders in the arrangement of sites are so frequently met with, and the complete successes so rare, that we may assume the subject seldom receives the thought it demands. Heather Cottage settles down so comfortably on its site, and the ground is so fully utilized in every part, that the general effect strikes the architect as one which shows a wise intuition and an admirable sense of artistic development. The general plan is correct in main particulars (see Fig. 121). The two square terraces of formal garden are bounded by the lawn at one end and the green orchard at the other, one of the squares being centred by a

FIG. 123. HEATHER COTTAGE

terra-cotta sun-dial, and the other by a sunk pond, tiled with dark blue-green tiles. The paving is patterned out in cobble-stones, tiles, and stone. Texture and colour are everywhere excellently managed. One thing is most agreeably noticeable about the building, which is, that by a thorough simplicity and naturalness of detail and general treatment, so picturesque a result is obtained. The sensible and obvious disposition of roof, chimneys, doors, and windows is the best thing one can wish for in a building of this kind, and those who only knew Mr. Baillie Scott's designs from the many illustrations he has published, may see

here that he has the keen intuition of an artistic builder for using his materials to a workmanlike and beautiful conclusion. It is to be feared that often the measure of an architect's success in picturesque house-building is judged more by the uneasy restlessness he produces and the variety and fidgety appearance of many "features" rather than by the breadth which should combine the whole into a reposeful group of harmonious proportion.

Situated on a gentle slope overlooking the Sunningdale golf

FIG. 124. HEATHER COTTAGE. THE HALL PARLOUR LOOKING TOWARDS ENTRANCE.

course, Heather Cottage forms the centre of a very charming landscape, which is suggested in the general sketch (see Fig. 122). The house nestles under the sloping ground so closely that its low proportions are doubly emphasized by the entrance drive, which is cut in against the bank. A pergola runs parallel with it for some forty yards. This pergola, with its brick-paved walk and brick steps, and the lawn which again runs parallel to it, the formal terrace garden, and the green orchard beyond, create a surrounding to the house which is of the greatest interest (see Fig. 123).

Entering through the angle vestibule, we turn to the left through a cross corridor, divided from the hall by lead light glazing. From it we descend a short flight of steps into the hall; the corridor thus forms a sort of gallery across one end of the hall, and affords a good view of

FIG. 125. HEATHER COTTAGE. HALL PARLOUR LOOKING TOWARDS ORIEL

it. A delightful small parlour opens off this corridor, and it has a doorway opening into the garden. The hall parlour has an open timber roof, and the walls have high wood panelling (see Figs. 124 and 125). A large open fireplace affords sitting space within the ingle-nook, which is lined with red brick below, and blue and white Dutch tiles above. A

decorated cast-iron back is fixed in the fireplace. This fine apartment, furnished with excellent old furniture and tapestry, is chiefly lighted by

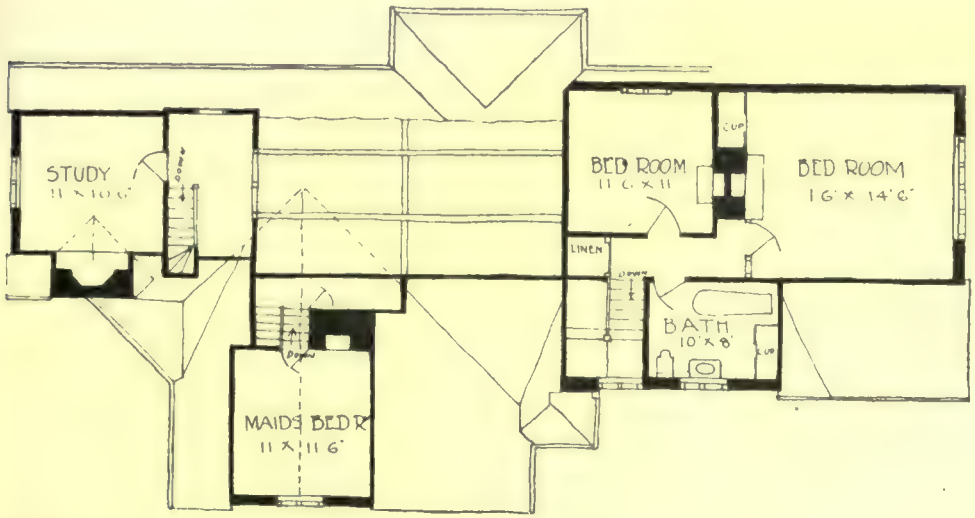


FIG. 126. HEATHER COTTAGE

a large oriel bay. Across the further end the spaces between the timber are filled in with brick, whitewashed over. The filling above the wall-panelling is in yellow toned plaster. There is no attempt at elaborate

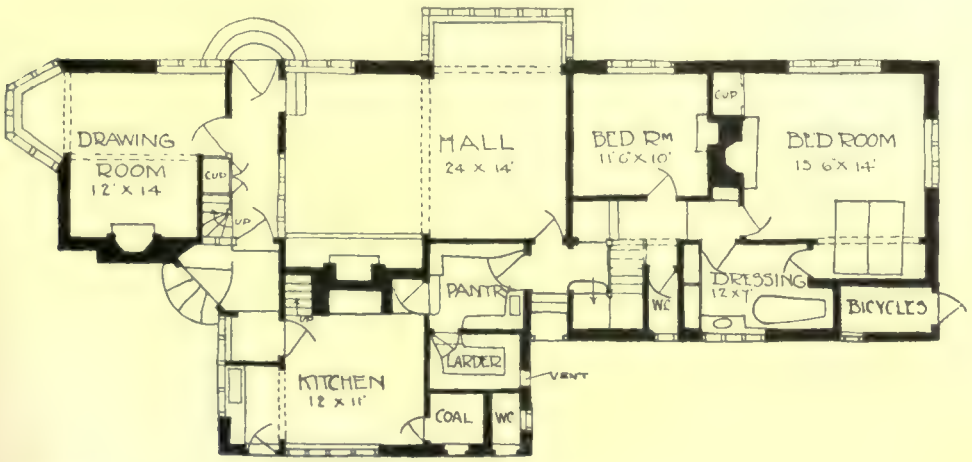


FIG. 127. HEATHER COTTAGE

finish or ornament anywhere, in fact the roof trusses are very much what any ordinary country carpenter would have done in mediaeval times, and are joined together with wood pegs.

The general character of the woodwork of the interior is worth noting. The beams and joists are finished roughly with the adze, and look as if they had not entirely forgotten that they were once trees! In the treatment of each material the aim has been to preserve and emphasize its real character, instead of reducing everything to a level surface in producing what is styled "high-class joinery." In fact, it may almost be claimed that this is a house designed on principles which were once universally practised but are now forgotten. It may be looked upon as an attempt to recreate not the outward and more superficial features of

FIG. 128. HEATHER COTTAGE

the past, but the principles of which these features are the outward, and often the merely accidental, expression.

The plan of Heather Cottage (see Figs. 126 and 127) is a resolve, in spite of restrictions, to have at least one large room, and to make the other rooms appear as appendages to it—little retreats which make the central house-place appear more spacious by contrast. The roof timbers, instead of being barely strong enough for their office, are of ample proportions. The illustrations give an idea of the excellent result secured by carrying out this plan of substituting the large apartment for two or more small ones. In country houses, where dance parties and other entertainments are often desirable, this architectural advantage would be much appreciated, and it certainly adds to the enjoyment of every-day existence.

This method of planning has supreme advantages over a room of the ordinary type. In such a room a dining-table or a grand piano is not an absorbing feature. The possessor, too, may indulge a little in the collection of good specimens of old furniture. Every item in the furnishing of the hall at Heather Cottage appears to have been selected by the owner with careful thought and good judgment. Much of it is from old collections, and the general effect is a very harmonious picture of construction in old and new decorative woodwork.

FIG. 129. HEATHER COTTAGE

The drawing-room is also very pleasing, both in its proportion and its simple treatment. It is furnished in white, with a carpet of purple tone, and furniture coverings of purple and green and white. The walls are covered with plain white wood panelling, and there is plain plaster, without any cornice, for frieze and ceiling. In many suburban drawing-rooms we find greater cost and more display without a suggestion of the artistic effect that is found in a room like this. It is more than likely that if a wider public had the opportunity of seeing charming houses like Heather Cottage, there would be many more built on similar lines. It must, of course, always be remembered that not even the ablest

architect, any more than the most gifted painter, can always produce a work of quite conspicuous quality. Heather Cottage conveys a very good lesson of what can be accomplished with moderate outlay on a comparatively small but choice site, and it is a piece of architectural work which may encourage the development of simplicity in design, for here simplicity reigns supreme. The really fine qualities which one should seek in the smaller domestic English work are simplicity and good proportion, and these may be obtained in any building without extravagant outlay.

The garden at Heather Cottage is admirably laid out. Instead of walled enclosures, we find blocks of peat built up like brickwork. These are already grown well over with heather. Along the garden front of the house is an ornamental terraced garden on two levels (see Fig. 128). In the upper level the central feature is the sun-dial, and in the lower the sunk pond. This little piece of formal gardening, lying between the white walls of the cottage and the open common land with its cluster of pine trees, has a fascinating effect; it shows, too, what a great deal can be accomplished in a single season, for it was only commenced about nine months before I saw it complete.

LITTLESHAW

FROM all the stores of precedent out of which houses are evolved the architect selects that which appeals most strongly to his taste or inclination, and gradually develops a more or less distinctive style according to his special ability. Thus we find that a half-timber house is by no means the same thing with one architect as with another, and the treatment of rough-cast walls may have quite a different character in the hands of various designers. And the house here illustrated in many ways departs much from the ordinary type of rough-cast building, and would readily be singled out by an architect as showing a distinctive character in comparison with the average designs we see about us.

A hill-side house is often made the excuse for all sorts of ingenious plans which are both inartistic and uncomfortable. A sloping site often suggests that the ordinary living-room should be above the kitchen

level, and this, where a proper lift service is not provided, may cause great inconvenience and extra labour, besides affording good opportunity for the smell from cooking to pervade the entire house! Sometimes a sloping site suggests some three slightly different ground levels of only three or four steps each, and this is perhaps one of the worst evils it is responsible for. Another economical solution of the hill-side site is to be found in utilizing the lowest level for the bedrooms, and although this is perhaps better than placing the kitchen below, it is not a very satisfactory or agreeable plan.

In the case of Littleshaw, the architect has utilized the steeply

FIG. 130. LITTLESHAW: LEONARD STOKES, ARCHITECT

falling site to picturesque effect by coming in at the ground floor level from the courtyard or entrance drive to the kitchen and living-rooms, and giving up the lower portion of the house, which is entered from the level of the lower terrace, to a skittle alley and heating chamber. As the bedrooms are chiefly within the slope of the roof, the elevation of the building to the entrance court is very low by comparison with the height from the lower terrace. The whole effect of the house, whether from the upper or lower side, from its approach drive or from the valley below (see Fig. 130), is pleasingly suggestive of complete appropriateness to its site, and of a picturesque and comfortable setting. The house is built up under one main roof and its length

lies along the hill-side (see Fig. 131). It has no very great width to cause a needless amount of excavation. This is the really economical and satisfactory way to build a house on a hill-side, though we often find houses of very square form so placed on a sloping site that a large amount of excavation is required.

The immediate approach is up a somewhat steep drive, under a pergola cut through the slope of the hill, and covered by a trellis work from one bank to the other. The effect is excellent, both in ascending and descending. It is a good climb up from the railway station, and the

FIG. 131. LITTLESHAW

view over wooded hills to the south, west, and east is a striking one. The outlook from the veranda along the garden front, right away over tree-tops and valley, towards the opposite hills, is very charming.

That this interesting and attractive house was designed by a distinguished architect for his own use explains the somewhat unusual nature of the plans. The scheme is not that of the large hall-living-room, for what might be styled the hall is really a large parlour shut off from the vestibule and staircase, and forming an ordinary enclosed room, but still serving as hall space to two other apartments, the dining-room, and the study (see Fig. 133). The large room is most satisfying in its effect of proportion and lighting. One side of it, facing the fireplace, is

occupied by almost continuous window space looking on to the veranda, so that the effect from that side is of a half light. Good window space

FIG. 132. LITTLESHAW. THE LARGE PARLOUR

is also obtained at the end looking out into the little formal garden, for which there is just room between the hill bank, the house end, and the trees.

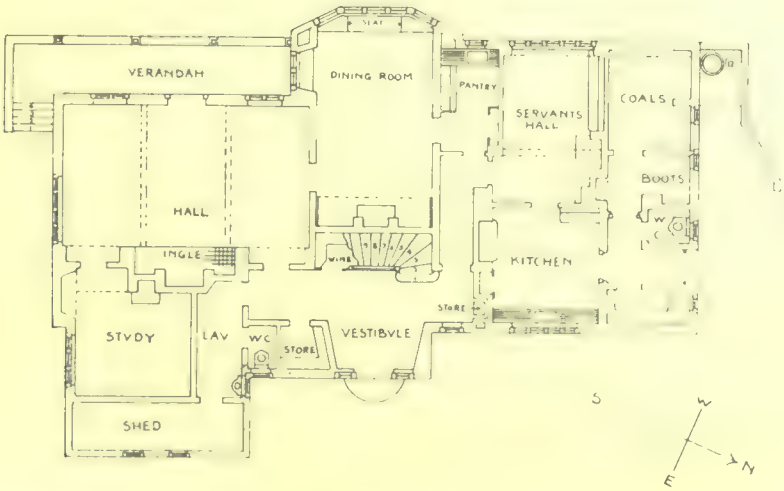


FIG. 133. LITTLESHAW

The fireplace recess is wide and low, and affords comfortable sitting space in fixed lounge seats at each side (see Fig. 132). The red brickwork enclosure to the fireplace is very happy in its form and build, and suggests just that homeliness and warmth which one looks for. The

great defect of many attempts of a similar kind is that the work is either too rough or too fine, too wide and vacant-looking or too pinched and mean. One could point out numberless instances where one or another of these faults is apparent. One charm of this very nice apartment lies in the fine items of furnishing: cabinets, lamps, curios, etc., such as are only got together by a discriminating taste.

The veranda which follows the length of this hall parlour is a delightful open-air lounge in summer, whilst in the winter it is glazed in, and forms a capital addition to the interior.

There is not much to be said about the dining-room, which is very simple in character. One end of it is occupied by the bay window (fitted with a window-seat) which commands a view over the valley, and the other end has a fireplace recess in which is a daintily decorated plaster panel by Mr. Anning Bell. In this room hangs the singular lamp pendant, which for convenience we have shown in the sketch of the hall parlour. This was the work of Mr. Harry Wilson, and hangs from an ostrich egg and crystal ball enclosed and supported by bands and chains

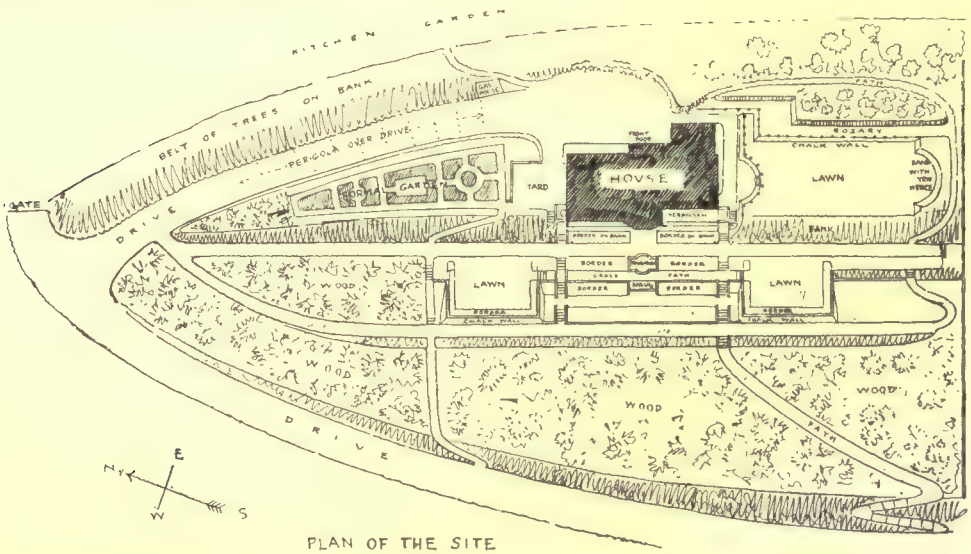


FIG. 134. LITTLESHAW

of decorated copper work, etc. This is one of those beautiful pieces of artistic craftsmanship which are seldom repeated and only to be found in the possession of the fortunate few.

It will easily be seen from our illustrations, which include a plan of

the garden design (see Fig. 134), that in its complete effect this is a home which has a distinct individual character, making for special and unusual charm.

The house is built of brick with a rough-cast surface finished in white, with cement dressings round the windows in the natural cement colour, which affords a pleasant contrast to the white walls. The woodwork is painted white and the roofs are covered with red tiles.

Littleshaw has the advantage of a beautiful site within ten minutes from Woldingham station, some 16½ miles from London. Woldingham

FIG. 135. LITTLESHAW

has apparently only been discovered within recent years, for it is one of the few beautiful and healthy country places near London not yet spoilt by building. The downs reach to a height of some 850 feet above sea level and the North Downs Golf Club has its nine-hole course here on the top of the hill overlooking the magnificent prospect towards the sea.

The site affords many delightful peeps of house, garden, and the distant landscape, and is gradually being developed in the form of the garden plan shown herewith.

There is no chance of a house situated like this one ever being

overlooked by other buildings, or having the beauty of the views curtailed or even spoilt. It is an ideal spot for the home of a professional man where, within a few minutes of a railway station, there is all the charm of retirement and seclusion. Already surrounded by good growth of trees, the process of garden development is one which can be conveniently carried just so far as may be desired. Among all the architects' houses I have seen, it holds one's memory with a most distinct feeling of suitability in its environment, and it has that most desirable element in such a building, a sense of homeliness and comfort, without which other things seem of small account.

NARFORD

FIG. 136. NARFORD: J. S. GIBSON, ARCHITECT

YOU may walk across a breezy, open common within six miles of Charing Cross and silhouette with your hands a view such as is shown on the Fig. 136. Within that focus you have all the essentials of a charming picture. A suburban home is its central feature, leading up to which the pathway winds between the common bushes and through an opening in the hedge to a roadway bordered with trees. That there are many more houses all about you is the

necessity of the suburbs, but the open common is so frequent a boon to Londoners, that many a real country resident might well become envious. Your frontage may be limited, and your garden small, but whilst your house lasts it commands views so wide and long that every day you feel the benefit of life on the edge of an open common.

FIG. 137. NARFORD

There, at any rate, the pressure of surrounding bricks and mortar and teeming population is taken off, and you have a fine freedom of air and sky. It seems to me that much might be said in favour of a suburban residence under such conditions.

Though you cannot detach the suburban house from the influence of its fellows, some capital might be made out of that influence from an architectural point of view if architects oftener had the chance. I can imagine that even in a long row of houses built close together a

something of individuality and distinction might be obtained by the form of outline and mass adopted for each. If the sky-line alternated with a higher and lower level, and if the contrast between vertical and horizontal features were maintained, if varying effects of colour in

FIG. 138. NARFORD

materials were adopted, if the entrances were varied—in short, if good architectural variety were obtained, there seems to me no reason why rows of detached houses should be so uninteresting as they usually are. The chief argument against the architectural betterment of this arrangement of buildings is, of course, that of cost. But this could doubtless be met satisfactorily by the design of some half-dozen

recurring types, and as a set-off against the cost would be found the increased attractiveness of variety and individuality amongst the houses. I believe there is no other house exactly like Narford anywhere near it, but there are similar types by the same experienced architect, and the good qualities of the house are repeated with variously treated architectural features.

In Narford we have an example of the dominating pyramidal roof, with a picturesque entrance gable on one side, which relieves it

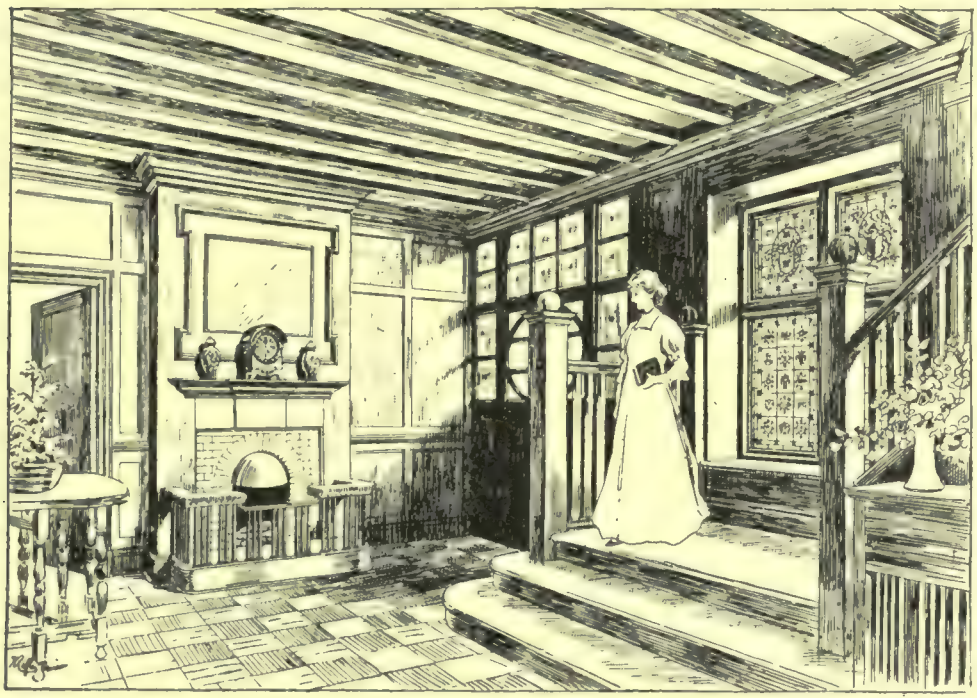


FIG. 139. NARFORD. THE HALL

without detracting from its dominating quality. The first element of success in any building, large or small, is the dominance of some part which shall lead the rest, and it often happens that, however confused and broken up many of the parts of a building may be, the outstanding prominence of some roof, chimney, or turret, does much to fix a dominating emphasis which saves the whole effect. But we have nothing which disturbs the absolute dominance of the main roof in the house here illustrated, which, by coming nearly to a point, produces a good emphasis in the sky-line. If the eaves of the house merely followed round from the main front without the break of the gable, the result

would be quite satisfactory, and the large roof mass and outline would still form a dominating feature. In my little sketch of the house from the common this is, I think, fully apparent (see Fig. 136). To an architect the architectural quality of a house makes, of course, a special appeal, for he sees the why and wherefore of it all, but a result like this ought to appeal to an educated public who can appreciate a picturesqueness which is not vulgar, or a variety which may be restful and simple. Architects are judged very much by the bad work which

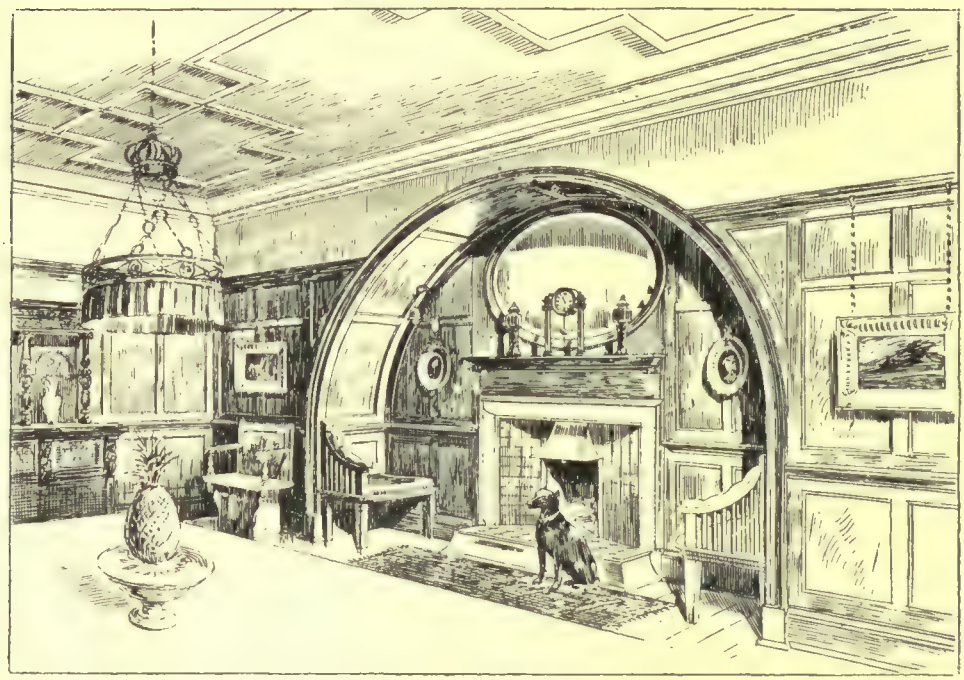


FIG. 140. NARFORD. THE DINING ROOM

appears in suburban houses, and with the large proportion of which they have nothing to do.

The entrance to Narford is in the gable on the side road (see Figs. 137 and 138), the main front being occupied by the dining-room and morning-room. The drawing-room fronts the garden lawn at the back, as is obviously most suitable, and a pleasant outlook over the lawn is also obtained from a terrace flat on the bedroom floor. The most unusual feature in the house is the oak-panelled hall, which is charmingly homelike and comfortable (see Fig. 139). The staircase goes up in an easy, pleasant fashion, without the distressingly awkward soffits

and dodges which accompany its ascent in so many houses. The stair case windows are decorated with some effective stained glass by Mr. J. H. Salisbury, which illustrates the connection of the owner with Battersea and Cape Town, of which places he was Town Clerk. The arms of these boroughs make good window decoration, besides linking the history of the owner with his house. This is an item in house decoration too often overlooked. It will often be found that there is sufficient *motif* in the details of a client's life or origin to suggest

FIG. 141. NARFORD. THE DRAWING ROOM

interesting decorative material, which in glass, plaster, wood, or metal-work may well find a permanent record.

The dining-room, again, is panelled in oak, with an arched ingle recess in oak, which gives an interest to the fireplace wall (see Fig. 140). The drawing-room has been enlarged by a large glass porch or conservatory, which covers its full width, and makes a delightful lounge with pretty arrangement of electric light for evening use. This room is furnished in white, with a dainty Renaissance paper, of a soft gray tone with pale blue stripes. The mantel-piece (see Fig. 141) is of broad,

simple design, quite a contrast to the fussy creations which do duty in so many modern drawing-rooms.

Amidst the wonderful strides which are being made in the design of modern homes, the country house has absorbed a somewhat undue share of attention, and it is not too much to say that the enterprise which should expend itself on the improvement of the suburban home would find a large reward. There are so many who are absolutely obliged to live within the suburban area that the field for improvement in this direction seems almost unlimited. The difficulty

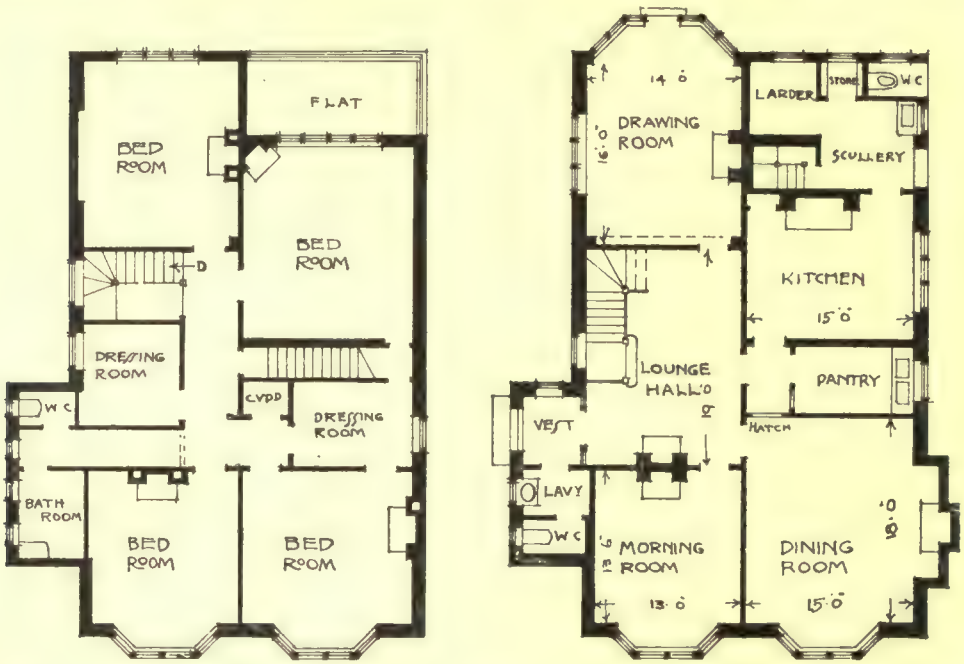


FIG. 142. NARFORD

in the way of better things is, in fact, that this class of house is so much in the hands of speculative builders that the cost of every effort in better design is begrudged. The architect has practically no chance. Even his fee for the bare design, without any superintendence, is found too burdensome, and it is only the very best builders who will encourage such a luxury. The consequence is that the immense growth of the suburban building is very bad, and the fault of it is wrongly attributed to the state of modern architecture. Little hope can be expected for better result until the public choose to demand something better themselves.

THE ORCHARD

IN order that my readers may see what an architect of marked individuality does for himself when untrammelled by the intervention of a client, I have chosen for illustration a house at Chorley Wood, built by Mr. Chas. F. A. Voysey for himself. Mr. Voysey has been one of the most individual forces in modern house architecture in

FIG. 143. THE ORCHARD: C. F. A. VOYSEY, ARCHITECT

recent years, and those who have seen his houses know that he is no mere paper architect, but that when he designs, he sees things in the concrete.

This house is placed some twenty feet from the road, and is approached by a straight pathway paved with slates and bordered on either side by yew hedges (see Fig. 143). Across the road to the north-west are the Duke of Bedford's woods. The site is a charming one, being an old apple orchard of two and a quarter acres. This orchard

slopes gently to the south and east, and is surrounded by old tree-grown hedges of hazel, holly, and hornbeam. But the special charm of this high, sunny situation, with its hundred orchard trees, reaches its

FIG. 144. THE ORCHARD

climax in the green lawn on the garden side of the house, where stands the great cherry tree, spreading over a circle of ground fully sixty feet in diameter. From the lawn there are views in all directions through the orchard. On the right there is a group of trees—walnut, cherry,

and holly—while on the left the eye lingers in pleasure on the long grass walk that leads to the tennis lawn, where a fine wych elm marks its extreme western corner. In no direction is another building to be seen; the owner is absolutely monarch of all he surveys.

Looking back towards the house from the kitchen garden, from the tennis-lawn, and from down the vistas of fruit trees, we catch delightful glimpses of its creamy-white walls and green slate roofs (see Fig. 144), but more charming still is the peep we get of it from under the spreading branches of the big cheery tree.

We enter the house through a recessed porch in the front wall, which, by the way, is an excellent and inexpensive method of providing a porch (see Fig. 145). We first reach the hall parlour, of which we have a sketch showing staircase enclosed by a vertical lattice, which is continued round the landing upstairs (see Fig. 146). This, in its simplicity, refinement of colour, and general detail, gives an Anglo-Japanese appearance to the design. The ceilings are but eight feet high, and have a white frieze twenty-four inches deep, so that window light is well diffused. The morning sun shines down the staircase as one goes to breakfast.

FIG. 145. THE ORCHARD

In every room is an air flue built up beside the smoke flue. The warmth generated by this proximity creates an up-draught, the effect of which produces a slow but constant ventilation. To prevent the fires sucking up too much cold air under the doors, an iron pipe leads from the outer air, under the floor, to the back of the hearth of every fireplace. In The Orchard the minimum cost of maintenance is reached, as it is without wooden barge boards, fascias, etc.

The windows have leaded lights fixed into stone surroundings, the opening casements being of iron. All windows are air- and water-

tight, and do not rattle in any wind. In each room there is one square of glass that will open, so that outside air is ensured even in the wildest weather. Not one of the windows has, or requires, the gloomy pall of curtain upholstery, which in mid-Victorian days was so inartistic as well as so insanitary an adjunct to house furnishing. Instead, short casement curtains, with rings which slip along brass rods, serve to shut out the night.

Like many modern houses, the floors are solid, and the usual

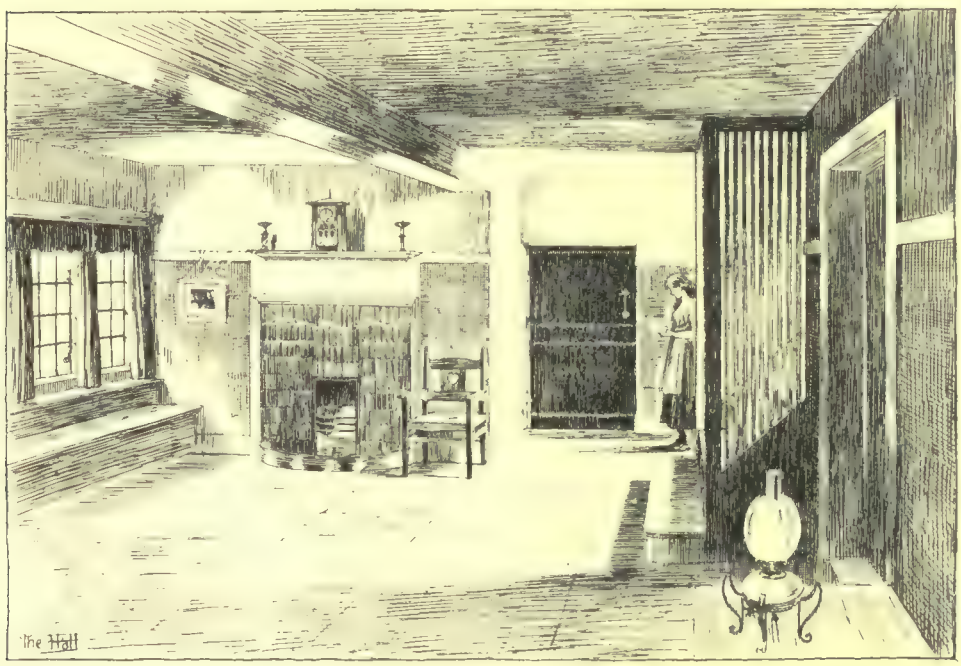


FIG. 146. THE ORCHARD

sleeper walls and ventilated space under them are dispensed with. The walls are built of bricks covered with cement rough-cast and lime-whitened. The roof is of gray-green slates, the hips and ridges are of lead, and the chimney-pots are black.

The children's play-room is on the south-east side, catching all the morning sun, and is close to the garden entrance. The dining-room (see Fig. 147) is also on the south-east side, so the most trying meal of the day becomes a sunshiny affair at The Orchard. The study is on the north-west side of the house; it has a recessed couch and a long window with steady north light for drawing-boards.

There is no withdrawing-room, for this is the home of folk who live simply, and not for the "congested visitation of cold acquaintance," for is it not in what Charles Lamb calls "Hearty, homely, loving Hertfordshire"?

FIG. 147. THE ORCHARD

A word may be said as to the general colour effect of the interior, which is white, with green-gray and blue for floor and furniture coverings. Every detail of the house—furniture, carpets, curtains, wall-papers, and metal fittings—was designed by the architect. Oak

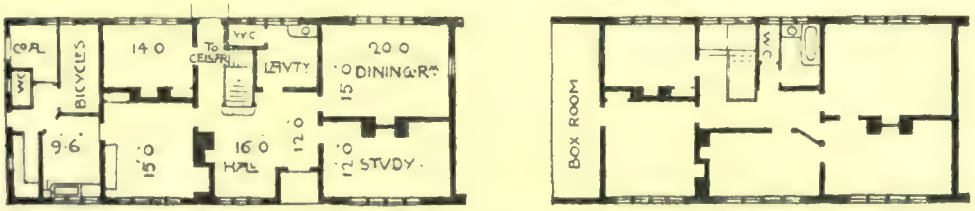


FIG. 148. THE ORCHARD

throughout is used for the furniture, and the wood is in its natural colour, which every day grows more pleasant to look upon. In certain rooms the walls are hung with plain paper, and in others a flowery pattern appears. Ornament for ornament's sake is conspicuous by its absence, and the aim has been to keep all useful objects simple,

graceful, and easy to clean. Red turkey-twill curtains act as blinds, and at night their warm glow welcomes home the chilly traveller.

Description and illustration do not fully convey the reposeful simplicity of this pleasant home, but the architect has shown how practical he can be and still remain artistic, simple yet interesting, new and individual in his ideas, yet travelling along the safe and satisfactory path of the best traditions of British architecture.

LITTLE THAKEHAM

JUST as along the backwater of a river we often meet with scenes of the greatest beauty and interest, so we find amongst the less frequented roadways views of the country-side which are unsurpassably charming. In a road journey from east to west just a little

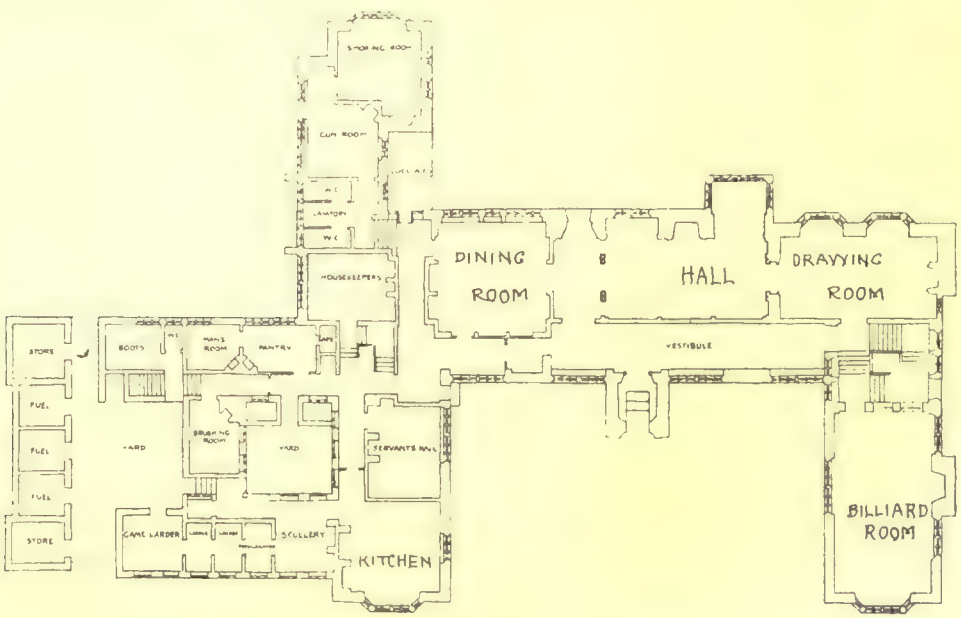


FIG. 149. LITTLE THAKEHAM: E. L. LUTYENS, ARCHITECT

way above the line of the South Downs we may meet with this charm of the "backwater" country, free from busy traffic and the mad rush of motor-cars. In this kind of country Mr. Blackburn has found a site for his house at Little Thakeham. The ground falls in a pleasant slope down to the woods on the south side of the house, and some

fine forest trees border the site to the east. It is in some ways a particularly good position, for it has a delightful outlook, and the trees furnish it without overshadowing the house. But a retired spot like this removes the home from the knowledge of any but the personal friends of the owner. Many delightful houses by the same architect, Mr. E. L. Lutyens, are to be found in very retired parts, and as this is also the case with the work of many who are creating the best modern houses in England, it is obvious that the foreign visitor to this country has small chance of forming a fair opinion of the state of our modern

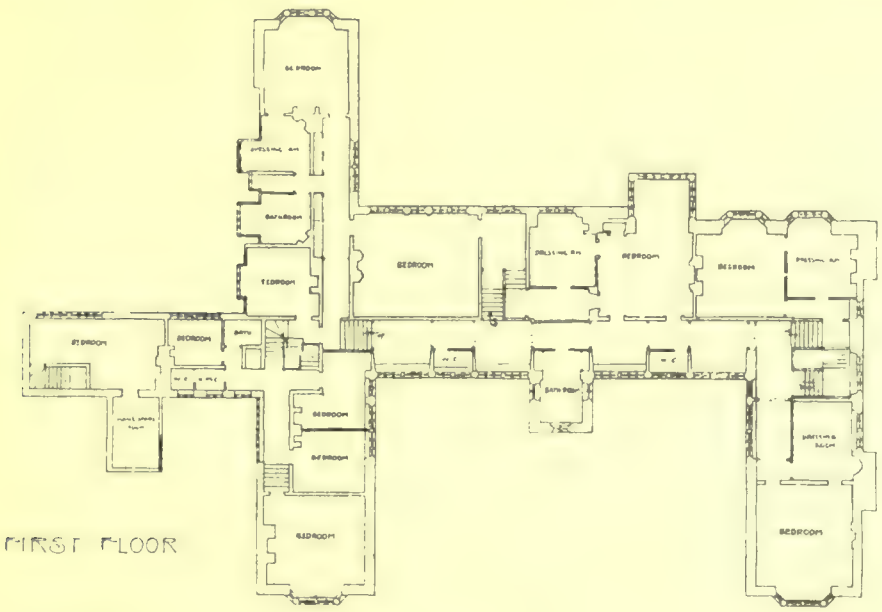


FIG. 150. LITTLE THAKEHAM

domestic work unless he has some special means of guidance. In fact one of the sound reasons for a book like this is that it is only from such sources that architects and the public are likely to learn anything of many good examples of modern architecture.

Most architects who have seen Little Thakeham will be of opinion that it is one of the best out of the many good things Mr. Lutyens has done. Though picturesque to a degree, it has fine qualities of balance and symmetry, and is a strikingly pleasing composition in both of its main frontages. Though it is not really what one would call a big house, it has the air of one, and its ample

FIG. 151. LITTLE THAKEHAM

corridor space and large hall betoken a generosity of idea which one usually associates with capacious manor houses. The large hall, with

FIG. 152. LITTLE THAKEHAM. GARDEN FRONT

its lofty oriel window, its stone-lined walls, and stone screen, though serving as a hall of access to rooms and stairs, is really a quite comfortable apartment, and could be used as a fine dining hall, as well

FIG. 153. LITTLE THAKEHAM. ENTRANCE FRONT

as a ball room! The architect has a partiality for the long entrance corridor such as we see at Little Thakeham. At the west end of the corridor, in a quiet corner, is the library, whilst along its south side are ranged the drawing-room, hall, and dining-room, with doorways

opening in direct line right through them, and forming a charming vista from the fireplace in the drawing-room to the fireplace in the dining-room (see Figs. 149 and 150).

Little Thakeham is a stone house with tall brick chimney stalks. The stone was found within a hundred yards of the site, and is full of delightful colour and texture, very tough and hard to work. The inside window splays are finished with dressed stone throughout, whilst the hall is lined with stone to a considerable height.

FIG. 154. LITTLE THAKEHAM

The stairs are so arranged that they give on to a landing looking down and across the hall, and from this landing the main upstairs corridor is reached. The corridor is crossed with stone arches at intervals, and a door opening from it gives access to a balcony over the hall fireplace (see Fig. 151); thus one may come out and look down on the hall from above.

The simplicity which marks the treatment at Little Thakeham gives a breadth and dignity which, with the nice proportion of parts, afford singular satisfaction. When the results of time and tone are added to these initial qualities it will be difficult to imagine a better rendering of traditional English architecture.

The courtyard front is especially successful, and one notes with pleasure the fine breadth of solid wall surfaces and the effective emphasis of parts. The narrow entrance gable comes out from a fine mass of roof, and is flanked by two gables which are built up with tall chimneys (see Fig. 153). In studying a house like this we are carried back to the time when tradition influenced the art of building, and we

feel that honesty of method and purpose are again to the fore, replacing the false affectations which have run riot in England during the greater part of the nineteenth century. If the characteristically English style of house building had been held together by the traditional methods of Tudor and Jacobean times, perhaps we should have been saved from the regrettable pretentiousness which has so hindered the progress of architecture. We have been for many years too consciously anxious about the style and the art of what we are doing, instead of strenuously endeavouring to unite sound construction with the best use of the most suitable materials, and trusting to tradition and instinct for the artistic

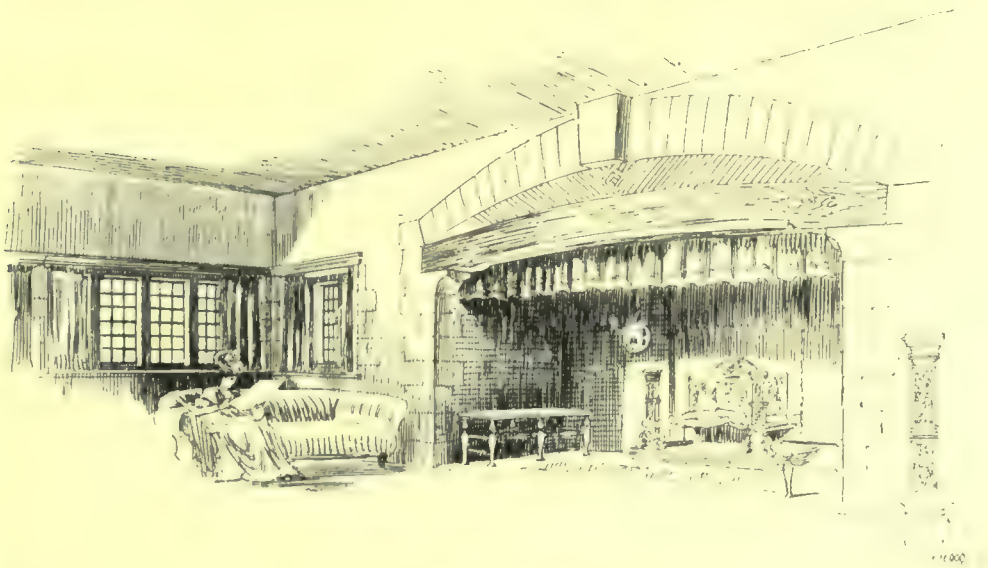


FIG. 155. LITTLE THAKEHAM

clothing of our work. On the whole we may take Little Thakeham as an honest endeavour to build simply and expressively, doing as little as possible—one might almost say practically nothing—for mere show. The charm of the house lies first of all in its excellent mass and grouping, its good sky-line, general form, and distribution of parts. Then we find nicely proportioned window openings in relation to the wall spaces, and an expression of solidity and strength in the building. Beyond this a great value lies in the colour and texture of the materials used. Not only is the local stone specially beautiful in colour and texture, but the roofs, red brick chimneys, and the nicely toned plaster of the interior walls have all been studied, and contribute

their value to tone and colour. The whole air of the house, in its plan of arrangement, its finishing and detail, is essentially homely. In the evolution of the architect's fancy many features both of plan and detail might be added to such a house as this, but it is difficult to imagine anything which would make it a better home.

The garden at Little Thakeham gives promise of great charm when the plant growths have developed more largely. Even now it is of much interest to the architect in the fine long lines of terraces, and the solidly constructed pergola, which, with its stone piers, oak lintels, and enclosing lattice work, affords a delightful vista extending at right

FIG. 156. LITTLE THAKEHAM

angles from the terraces of the south front. The adoption of the pergola as a feature of garden design has been so widespread in recent years as to outrun its reasonableness or suitability. Nowadays we constantly see a pergola placed most inappropriately, having no artistic value, leading to or from nothing else. At Little Thakeham the pergola carries out the level line of the terraces far from the house, and agreeably emphasizes the transverse axial line of the main buildings, whilst the three-way flights of steps at its southern end spread the architectural interest to a wide area beyond the actual building outlines (see Fig. 158). As we look over the features of the formal garden, the rose bush parterre, the well planted pergola, the

glorious poppy border to the lower terrace, and the other delightful items of the design, we realize what a great pleasure the making of such a garden must be, and how it may well absorb many long hours of happy interest. Instead of the old-fashioned vagaries of landscape gardening we have here the artistic scheme of a well-ordered and formal garden which extends the architectural values far beyond the walls of the house itself, and affords scope for delightful combinations of colouring and form.

FIG. 157. LITTLE THAKEHAM

The advice of an architect in the design of gardens is, fortunately, far more often sought nowadays than it used to be. No one should know better than the architect—in fact, few know so well—what are the lines of formal gardening which will best suit the house; and though, of course, it does not follow that the actual scheme of planting will come from him, he should at least be the best judge of the general arrangements. The work of a well-known architect of country houses might be named, which for many years past has always gained special distinction by some slight development of formal gardening, even where the expenditure was quite moderate. It might be little more

than one line of terrace, with steps at intervals, but this architect nearly always managed to convince his clients of the great value of spreading the architectural lines somewhat beyond the mere building itself, and the result is that few architects could show so full a measure of success in their house designs. Such a garden scheme as this at Little Thakeham is not to be accomplished in very many cases, but there is

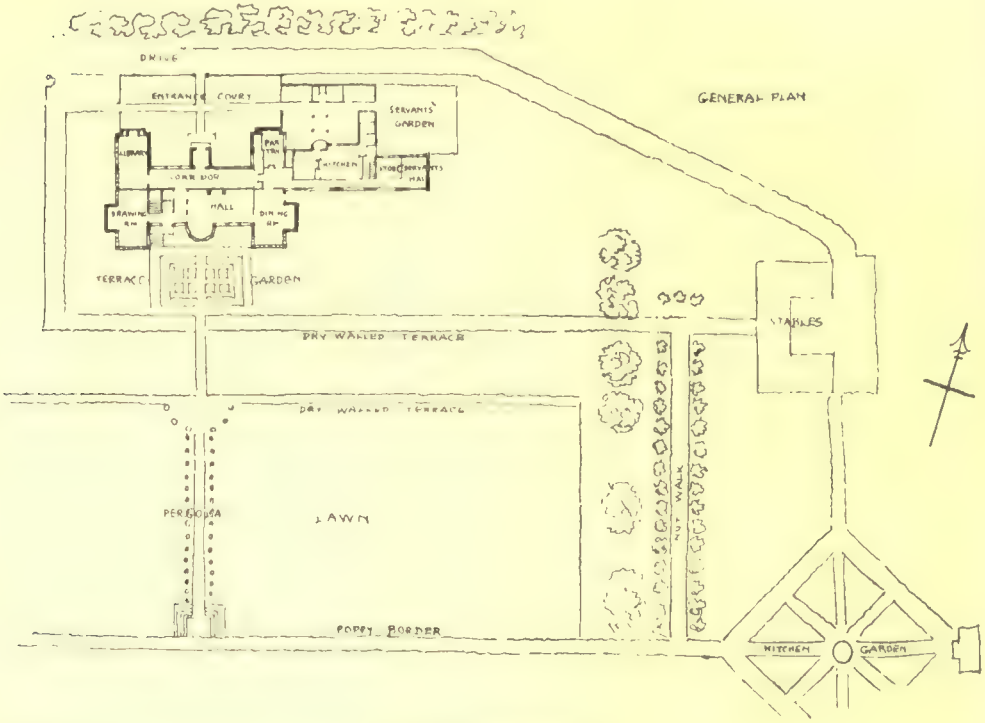


FIG. 158. LITTLE THAKEHAM

no reason why those who have to build very much smaller and cheaper houses should not emulate the artistic completeness which here exists, causing house and garden to re-act on each other with excellent effect. The enclosed courtyard about the entrance, the long lines of protected walks, the dainty beds of formal gardening, the fine length of dry terrace walling which holds numberless beautiful rock plants, and the pergola—almost a garden in itself—spread out the interest of Little Thakeham far beyond the walls of the house itself.

HOME PLACE, LIMPSFIELD

SOMETIMES the site of a house is so obviously suited to its purpose that the owner could hardly have desired a better, excepting, of course, the inevitable development of building activities in its neighbourhood. Limpsfield, with its pleasant elevation, its large stretch of open common land, its plentiful trees, and its easy accessibility from London, has provided many delightful sites for moderate sized houses, and I could name several which seem to me as nearly ideal as one could hope for. The place has, however, during the last twenty years paid the penalty of its attractiveness, and houses are now springing up in all directions to such an extent that it will apparently soon be difficult to find sites which offer the privacy and charming environment of Home Place, which is here illustrated.

FIG. 159. HOME PLACE. ENTRANCE

It is not easy to suppose anything more pleasing than is the entire aspect of this charming little domain which has been designed from one end to the other with exceptional thought and success. We approach Home Place from the pretty village of Limpsfield along a road winding between high trees and descending steeply from the common. The entrance gates, of which we give a sketch (see Fig. 159), open into a short drive turning quickly to the left. An entrance court is obtained by the high wooded bank on the left, the house on the right, and the stable buildings facing the approach. On this, the north side of the house, we find the entrance hall and kitchen offices, the three entertaining rooms being ranged along the south front. As the ground slopes towards the south, and the site of the house is bounded

on the north by the steep hill and on each side by plentiful foliage, it will be seen that the environment creates a sheltered setting which is very pleasing. The view towards the south extends over many miles of undulating country towards East Grinstead, which presents much variety and interest.

Home Place is built in red brick and stone after the picturesque Tudor manner. The two pen-and-ink drawings made from the house itself indicate its general character (see Figs. 160 and 161), but without account of the creepers and the effects of time and tone which have

FIG. 160. HOME PLACE: DOUGLAS AND MINSHULL, ARCHITECTS

already softened the harshness which accompanies all new building work. The entrance gable, with its stone oriel and wide oak door, over which is the motto Nisi Dominus, is a good piece of well executed architectural detail. The more elaborate stone detail has been reserved for this entrance front. It will be noted that the stable approach affords ample space for a carriage to wait in readiness under cover (see Fig. 161). The stable buildings from the south and east make a very picturesque group.

The interior of the house is so excellent that I much regret being unable to give any illustrations of it. As we enter, the main staircase is to the left (see Fig. 162). It is built up partly in old and partly in

new oak. The old part is chiefly the balustrade which is from a fine old house occupied by Archbishop Tillotson at Edmonton. The first floor landing is enclosed by square moulded posts, and the whole effect is very picturesque. To the right of the entrance is a large hall parlour with a comfortable corner fireplace. There is a large window to the west, from which beautiful sunset effects are obtained through the trees. The hall is panelled round with an oak dado. The drawing-

FIG. 161. HOME PLACE

room is entered both from the hall and the dining-room, and contains very fine old furniture. The dining-room is panelled right up in oak and has window seats looking out over the terrace. From the dining-room is also entered the library, and out of this latter is a door leading out to a roomy belvedere built up in oak and leading down by ten steps to the terrace. This height of the ground floor above the terrace provides good lighting space for the basement, which goes the whole length of the house, and affords much useful accommodation for work-shop, a room for mothers' meetings, a dark room, bicycle room, apple

store, and wine cellar. An interesting feature of the first floor is a little oratory built out from the main building on oak posts. This is finished with oak panelling and quaint lead light glazing.

Though Home Place is so excellent an example of house building and one of the best of the many admirable domestic buildings designed and carried out in many parts of England by its architects, Messrs. Douglas and Fordham and Messrs. Douglas and Minshull, its specially outstanding charm is its garden. Amongst modern gardens I have seen nothing of its kind better, perhaps none quite so good, in regard to the limitations imposed by its owner. The actually architectural part of the effect is not extensive, and is chiefly to be found in the lofty terrace which runs along the whole south front. The upper terrace is thirty-one steps above the path which skirts its base, and is laid with gravel. The next terrace, eleven steps down, is of grass, and below this are two flights of steps with a landing between. Roses are trained all over the sloping bank between the two terrace levels, and the bottom terrace is bounded by a buttressed wall from the lower level. All along below this is a great herbaceous border which in the summer is ablaze with magnificent clumps of brilliant flowers (see Fig. 163).

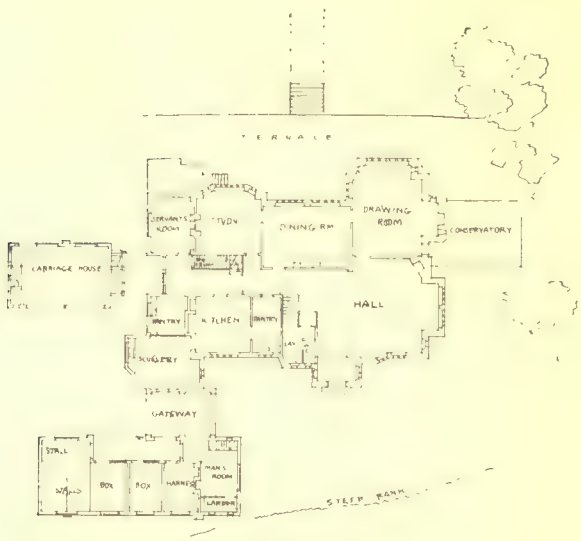


FIG. 162. HOME PLACE

The ground falls all along the site towards the south, and directly opposite the terrace steps a pergola covered with roses leads down to the pond below. This pergola is built up as a sort of hipped pavilion roof in the centre. Beyond the pond is a spacious tennis ground, and beyond that again a pergola leads into one of the most effective garden features I have anywhere seen. This is a pergola extending right and left nearly five hundred feet. The grass walk down it is three yards

wide, and in the beds at either side in the spring are continuous rows of daffodils. Behind these are the trained fruit trees up the sides of the pergola which make a sort of pleached alley, and, when the blossom is out, form a glorious picture of long lines of colour. Part of the charm of this lovely pergola is that the ground falls from each end to the centre, so that we cannot see one end from the other, but the grass walk merges into the roof. It is difficult to imagine anything more delightful than

FIG. 163. HOME PLACE. THE TERRACES

this lovely alley with its arbour at the end. To the west of the tennis lawn another pergola runs diagonally towards the centre point of the garden, and this is covered with wisteria and vines and leads into a circular area enclosed with posts and trellis, covered with wisteria. A beech tree is planted in the centre. Round about the pond is a formal yew hedge. In the spring are to be seen clumps of daffodils gleaming out through the trees of the kitchen garden on the east side. Behind this is a delightful little gardener's cottage. Beyond all this garden

ground is a stretch of quiet meadow land, and beyond this again fields and trees and hills fade away into the blue distance.

It would require the very best water colours by the ablest artist to suggest anything of the real charm of this beautiful garden which has been gradually evolved during the past few years by Mrs. Horace Barry from her own design, and affords a striking example of what loving thought and labour can accomplish when it is backed up by a refined taste. You cannot regard a garden like this without realizing how different it is from the perfunctory work so often done by mere professionalism. The amount of formality in it is just enough to suggest design and order without painful or monotonous accentuation, and one thing which pleasantly affects us about it is that there is ample space of quiet green grass all over to afford a good setting to the various features. There are plenty of gravel paths and green alleys, but the place is not made up into an intricate and elaborate design of formal lines, and the various features appear to have grown naturally from the conditions. Thus the great southern pergola is a pleasant repetition of the formal lines of the house and terrace, and also affords an agreeable screen between the house and the meadow—the herbaceous border along the boundary of the eastern plantation and that below the terrace wall afford long lines of glorious colour with good backgrounds, which are eminently pleasing and suitable—whilst the long descending alley and rose pergola from the terrace to the pond project the formal lines of the architecture very suitably up to the square pond below. These features all provide a certain formality which is all the more pleasing in that it is not too much accentuated. Between the square pond and the southern pergola the quiet stretches of tennis lawn and bowling green come with excellent effect. Of course, to realize the full beauty of such a charming garden you must see it at the various periods of the year, and one supreme period is when the roses are in full bloom.

FIG. 164.

AMESBURY HOUSE

THE indulgence in freedom of design, which is so easy and permissible in a country house, affords a striking contrast to the limitation imposed upon a town residence, and is likely to cause a somewhat embarrassing restraint on those who have to turn from a constant practice in the former class of design to the latter. The wide vistas and generous supply of light and air to the country house have to give way to the most circumscribed boundary and the most vexatious restrictions of lighting and outlook, of building proportions and heights, and relative areas of rooms and window space. There are, of course, town sites in which there is hardly any option in design at all, but there are also, in squares and gardens and pleasant avenues, sites with much possibility of good outlook, and an example of one of these latter, in which the architect appears to have grasped all the best possibilities, is Amesbury House, in Kensington Palace Gardens.

That a house in London, even in such an exceptional place as Kensington Palace Gardens, may be designed with something at least of the generous ground space which is the outstanding virtue of a good country house, may be discovered from the fine house which forms the subject of this notice.

There is no feeling of stint of space from the moment of entering Amesbury House. Directly the main vestibule door is opened we find a long vista across the hall and down to the end of the white vaulted corridor, which leads in a direct line between the dining-room and library. Then the roominess of the large hall, with its great oriel bay (see Fig. 166) and its picturesque enclosure of oak staircase and landing, suggests an amplitude of space on the site, which is fully borne out by the size of the entertaining rooms. Moreover, these rooms are all obtained on the ground floor, and the drawing-room and dining-room command a beautiful outlook across the avenue to Kensington Palace and ground. It was apparently taken for granted during Her late Majesty's reign that there would be decided objection to building on the site of Amesbury House and those adjoining, but now it has been considered permissible to build upon them.

The site of Amesbury House had its special limitations as to adjacent buildings and outlook which led up to the final arrangement of the plan. The beautiful open view in front benefits not only the drawing- and dining-rooms, but also some principal bedrooms, one with a balcony. To the back of the site there was no opportunity for the outlook of important windows right and left till some distance back, and no good view straight out to the rear. This led to the general arrangement of the ground floor plan, which shows the library window commanding a good view to the left, and the billiard-room to the right. The small drawing-room and the inner hall each look out pleasantly to the garden and trees.

FIG. 165. AMESBURY HOUSE. PORCH

Though this house is in general form and appearance of a Georgian type, such as gives a certain dignity and solidity of effect, it is treated with a careful attention to interest of detail (see Fig. 167). Thus the courses of tiles between the angle quoins, the aprons under the window sills, the clever detail of the porch and the slated gable in the centre flanked by pinnacles, afford, amongst other items, a fresh interest beyond the usual hackneyed type of Georgian detail. In fact we see some hint of that pleasant ebullition of spirit which has always constituted a charm in Mr. May's country houses. The lead gargoyles coming from the angles of the porch are departures from the strict etiquette of Queen Anne, which we may perhaps feel a little thankful for in these times of somewhat slavish precedent (see Fig. 165). The materials of the exterior are Portland stone, red bricks, and Westmoreland green slates.

The specially outstanding feature of Amesbury House, however, is the hall with its surroundings. It is led up to by a flight of marble steps

FIG. 166. AMESBURY HOUSE (HALL FIREPLACE AND ORIEL):
E. J. MAY, ARCHITECT

FIG. 167. AMESBURY HOUSE

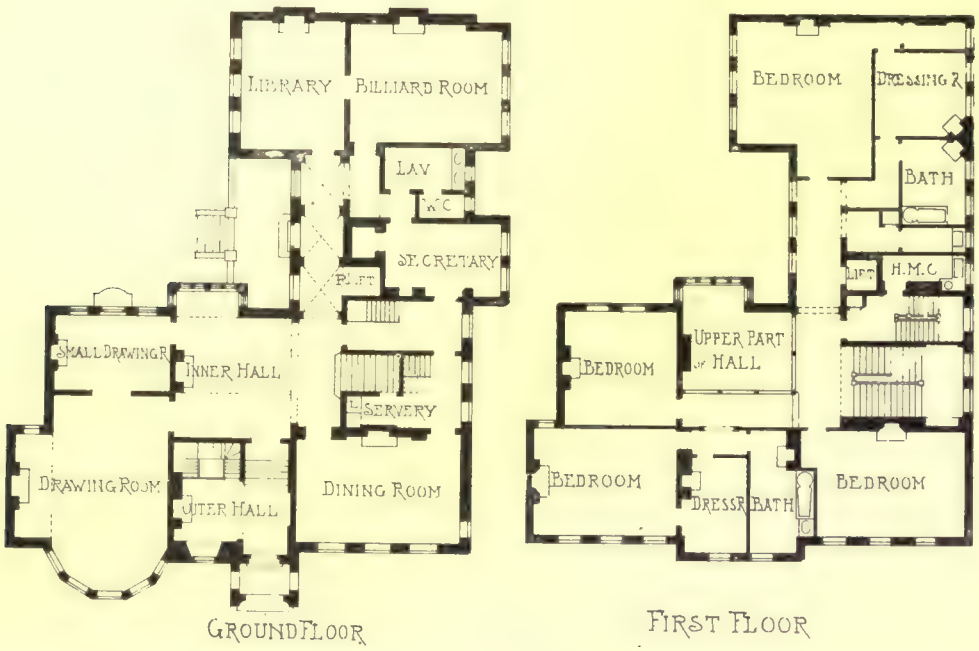
under a white barrel vault of plaster, whilst below this short flight of steps to the left is a good vestibule space (see Fig. 168), with fireplace and a glazed screen through which is the service from the kitchens below to the front door. Once inside the hall itself there is plenty of interest to take the eye. Chiefly to notice there is the good picture made by the tall stone fireplace and the lofty stone oriel. Then the library corridor, with its white plaster groined vaulting, is a very nice feature, both in detail and the effect of light and shade created (see Fig. 169). The opening to the stairs through the high oak panelling is pleasing, and also the landing gallery above, with its perspective of oak arches and nicely decorated plaster beams, affords much variety and interest. The main rooms in the house are very quietly and simply treated, and, of course, it depends very largely on the taste of the owner or occupier what the final result becomes. The house lends itself to a fine scheme of furnishing, and the quietness and simplicity of the constructive decoration will lend value of the sort we look for in such an important building. Any over-elaboration of picturesque features is somewhat to be deprecated in a house of this sort, and the general feeling of the design is so good that it only needs a finishing and furnishing of equal quality to make it one of the most successful good modern houses in London.

FIG. 168. AMESBURY HOUSE: VESTIBULE.

The basement is fully taken up by the many numerous modern domestic requirements. An electric passenger lift is provided from top to bottom, and down on this floor, besides the usual accommodation, we find a cook's sitting-room or office, a menservants' bathroom, and a place for an electric motor.

On the ground floor (see Fig. 170) it will be noticed that there is a private secretary's room, and the accommodation on the upper floors is extensive and well planned. There is a complete suite of bedroom,

FIG. 169. HALL CORRIDOR



FIGS. 170, 171. AMESBURY HOUSE

dining-room, private bathroom, and large wardrobe closets, all approached from a private lobby off the main corridor (see Fig. 171); so that we have here a house within a house, just as in large country

FIG. 172. AMESBURY HOUSE. BEDROOM LANDING

mansions, where much entertainment is provided, it is found desirable to secure a special amount of privacy for the family's own use. There are thirteen other bedrooms and four dressing-rooms, and a maid-servants' bathroom.

Amesbury House is one of a number which have been built for

Mr. William Willett, of Sloane Square, from the designs of well-known architects, and it is satisfactory to see one who has had such extensive dealings in house property giving practical evidence of the value of an architect's services.

FIG. 173. AMESBURY HOUSE. ORIEL FROM THE GARDEN

The great defect of many homes of this quality and cost is that the architect's care so often ceases with the structure, and it is then handed over to the tradesman. Fortunately the quality of decorative furnishing is nowadays far advanced on the early Victorian period, but, on the other hand, one looks in vain for those admirable developments by comparatively humble folk like those who produced the most characteristic and pleasing furniture of the English Renaissance. Everything is done on such a large scale now that small artistic enterprises can hardly hope to succeed. It would be a fine thing for the development of the artistic impulse amongst us if the middle-class upholsterer and cabinet-maker could be revived; we should have to pay more for our furniture, but we should encourage real art thereby, which can hardly be said to develop in the souls of those who are bought for little above a living wage by the great industrial concerns of the land. Suppose that the furnishing of a

place like this Amesbury House were put into the hands of a Sheraton or a Hepplewhite—a real artist whose great desire is to get the very best work done with something of individual character about it—would not the owner obtain something far above mere cost of labour and materials? We have amongst us many who have devoted rare ability to furniture design, but it does not appear to find its way into the knowledge of a very large public. Professor Lethaby, Mr. Lutyens, Mr. Spooner, Mr. Gimson, Mr. Ashbee, and many others have given quite a fresh impulse to furniture design, and yet one sees little enough of it amongst the art-loving public. Art will not advance amongst us beyond mere cleverness or mediocrity until its individual expression is more encouraged and better paid for.

THE DEANERY GARDEN

A HIGH wall (crowned on its sloping top with clumps of wallflower, stonecrop, white tufted arabis, golden alyssum and other beautiful growths) pierced with a single arched opening, forms the road inclosure to The Deanery Garden, and the dainty iron gate within the archway and the picturesque outline of tiled roof and chimney stacks are the only indications to the passer-by of anything architecturally interesting beyond.

FIG. 174. THE DEANERY GARDEN

Entering the gate you find yourself under a groined vaulting of white chalk which covers the cloister way up to the house door (see Fig. 175). Looking to the left this white vaulting crosses the cloister way through to the garden, and through the arches to the right you see a little courtyard, in the centre of which is a circular water tank and fountain jet from a dainty little bronze figure of a faun pressing a wineskin (see Fig. 176).

This courtyard is full of interest from its architectural treatment. On the house side is a length of half timber framing (see Fig. 174) and opposite to this we have the high wall crowned with its fringe of flowers and plants, and below it an old lead cistern, dated 1778, from which water runs along a zigzag channel to the tank, whilst looking back to the vaulted entrance there is a picturesque composition

FIG. 175. THE DEANERY GARDEN: E. L. LUTYENS, ARCHITECT

formed by the arches of the vaulting and the tall chimney-stack above. A quaint old bell and lamp hang from the walls. The sides of the court are raised in the shape of an octagon round the circular tank, about which are placed fine pots of agapanthus, the blue African lily.

Description does not convey an idea of the interest of all this, for it forms itself into many charming pictures as you vary your standpoint. I show a sketch looking back to the village street through the entrance

gateway (see Fig. 175). But the vaulted corridor forms the central feature of some charming effects of light and shade. And before we enter the house itself, if we go through the archway leading into the garden and look back towards the house, we have the view shown in my sketch of entrance porch with the pump in the foreground (see Fig. 177). Here is a glorification of a pump such as we do not often

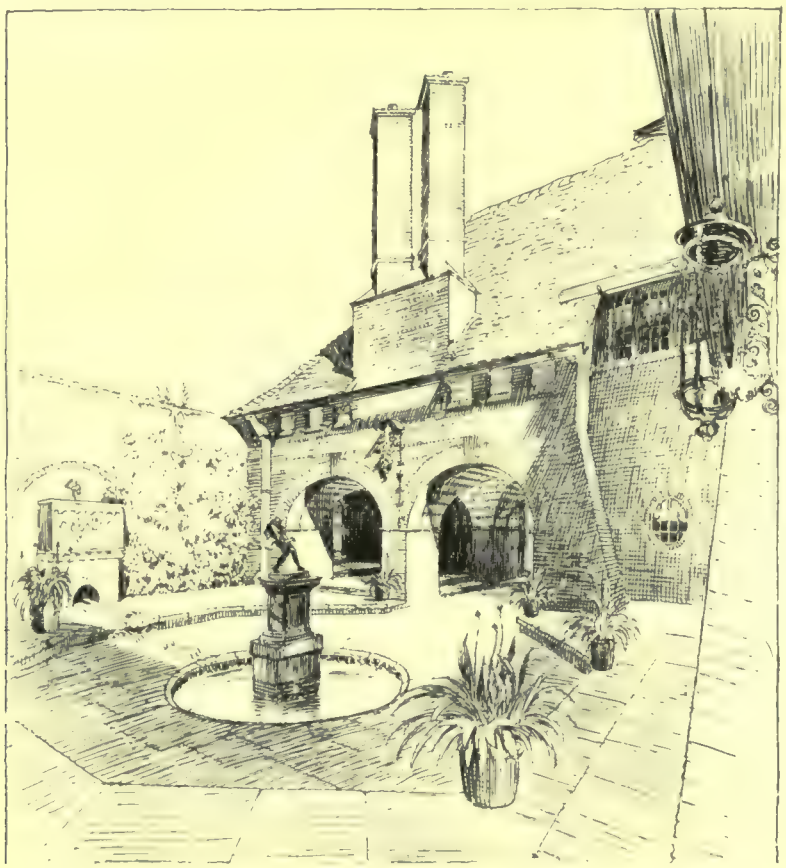


FIG. 176. THE DEANERY GARDEN. THE FOUNTAIN COURT

see. The case is built up in oak and has a quaint lead spout and domed top. We also note the weather vane, which is reminiscent of the time when the Dean of Salisbury had a garden here. The Dean is shown holding forth from his desk to three empty benches.

It will be now realized that instead of taking in the whole effect of the entrance side of the house at one glance, as is so usual, we have had two very uncommon glimpses of architectural interest entirely separated

FIG. 177. THE DEANERY GARDEN

from each other. And before we return to the porch and enter the house we ought, perhaps, to make a note of the very charming gable which is to be seen flanking the porch archway (see Fig. 178). This shows an admirable quality of texture and colour in the choice of materials, the

FIG. 178. THE DEANERY GARDEN

thin red bricks and silvery gray oak combine with the roofing tiles to a delightful result of tone and colour.

Referring to the ground plan (Fig. 180), it will be seen how the fountain court is planned and the way from it through the vaulted passage to the garden.

Entering the vestibule we pass through to the staircase hall in which we note the pleasant effect of the solidly built oak stairway, seen through the white chalk openings. If we go up the stairway we come

to a delightful oak gallery on the first floor, of which a slight indication is given (see Fig. 179).

From the stair hall is entered a garden vestibule which divides a cosy little parlour from the great hall and dining-room, all *en suite*. The hall is over 25 feet long, and has a large and lofty oriel window opposite the fireplace (see Fig. 181). This great oriel is a telling feature, both inside and out, with its 48 window openings and some 700 window panes. It rises to a height of 17 feet from the floor. The hall is over 23 feet high, and is built up in large panels of timber framing with curved braces. Above the oak panelling which covers

FIG. 179. THE DEANERY GARDEN. FIRST FLOOR CORRIDOR

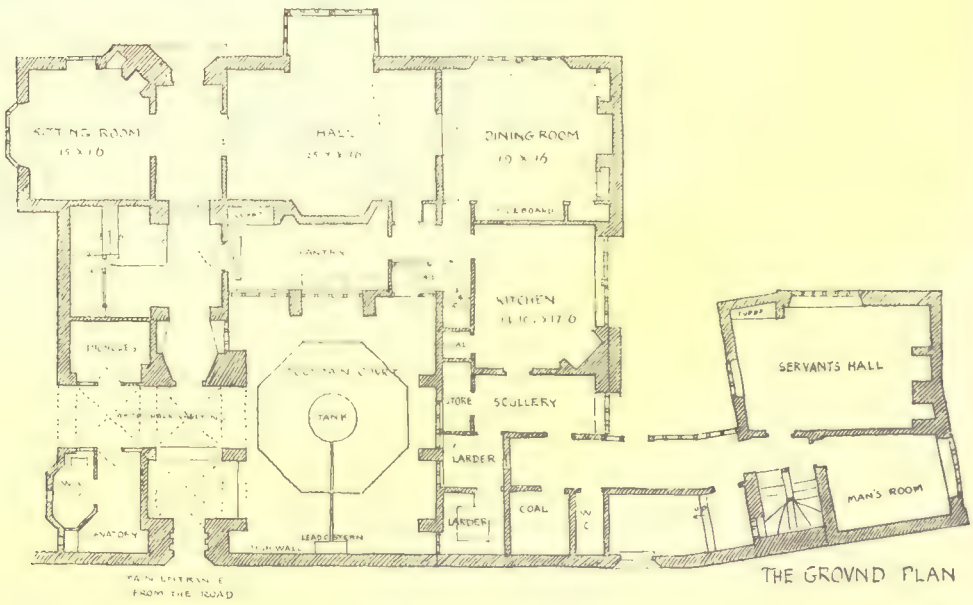


FIG. 180. THE DEANERY GARDEN

FIG. 181 THE DEANERY GARDEN. THE HALL

the walls to a height of seven feet, the framing is filled in with courses of white chalk. There are two shaped trusses across the hall, and the fireplace is built up under a beam reaching from one to the other. A corner of the hall is illustrated looking through to the dining-room (Fig. 182). But quite a series of pictures would be needed to emphasize thoroughly the delightful quality of the suite of entertaining rooms of which this beautiful hall forms part.

Upstairs the house is full of interest, and one of the quaintest of the bedrooms is illustrated (Fig. 183), in which the old four-poster appears daintily moulded in a modern version of metal posts combined with hard wood framework to sides and ends. In this bedroom the half timber framing of the hall appears at one end. Part of the furniture is of the architect's design, as note the table in the foreground of the sketch, but here and in all other parts of the house when I saw it in Mr. Hudson's occupation were to be found carefully selected examples of old furniture which toned in delightfully with the general design. My sketch of the fireplace in this bedroom (Fig. 184) indicates how effectively two old rococo wall mirrors decorated the end of the room. The fireplace, it will be seen, has a steep hood of plaster rising from an oak lintel and shelf. The grate is built up in stone with splays of tile work.

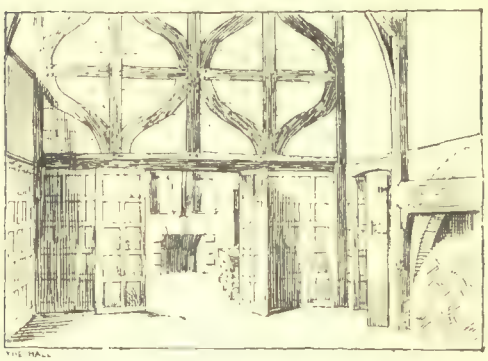


FIG. 182. THE DEANERY GARDEN. HALL

To deal adequately with the beautiful Deanery garden itself would take up much space, but the moment one steps out of the garden door one realizes what an interesting and delightful scheme it is. I give a sketch plan (Fig. 185) which shows that the garden door opens out on to a raised terrace (Fig. 186) which, at its further end, leads down by circular steps to three diverging paths through the orchard. From the keystone of the arch under the terrace is a water jet which delivers into a semicircular tank below (see Figs. 187 and 190), and from this the water passes along a narrow water channel over one hundred feet in length to a circular tank at the further end of the garden. Musks and

all sorts of dainty plants enjoying water find a growth along the sides of the channel. Halfway along is a well modelled figure on a pedestal placed on an axial line with a transverse way by stepping stones

FIG. 183. THE DEANERY GARDEN. A BEDROOM

across the grass from the orchard to the bowling green above (see Fig. 188).

One of the most pleasing views in the whole place is that shown in my sketch (Fig. 188) where the water channel is illustrated with the terrace and oriel window below. The pergola is illustrated (Fig. 189) as

it appeared before becoming covered with foliage, to show how it is built with square and round brick pillars connected by transverse and diagonal timbers. When covered with climbing roses, clematis and Japanese vine it forms an attractive picture.

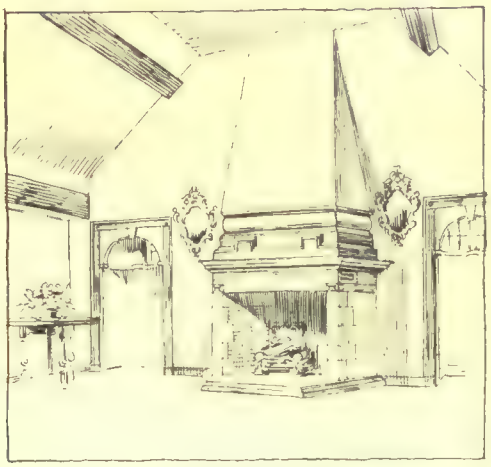


FIG. 184. THE DEANERY GARDEN

After all, charming and interesting as is this house, recalling so ably the fine qualities of our best old work, it is not second in interest to the garden, which is assuredly one of the most beautiful of all modern efforts on a similar scale. So much has been done in a comparatively small space without any effect of overcrowding, and with a feeling of quietude and breadth. It is a signal tribute to the ability of its architect, Mr. E. L. Lutyens, to create a

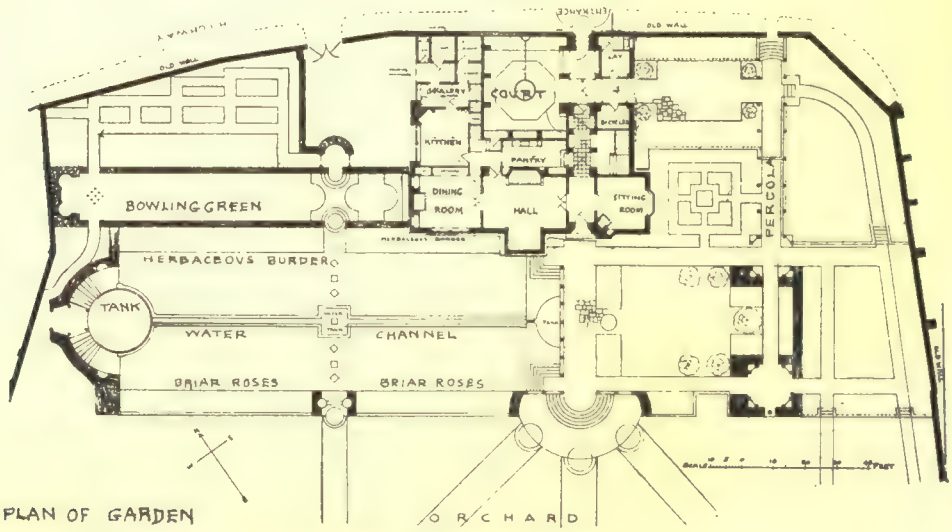


FIG. 185. THE DEANERY GARDEN

house, and to Miss Gertrude Jekyll to create a garden which are so entirely in sympathy with each other. We find so much variety, disposed in such skilful fashion, that our interest never flags. We

pass from the fountain court with its wallflowers and its lilies, through the cloister to the pergola, the bowling green, the tennis lawn, the

FIG. 186. THE DEANERY GARDEN

rose garden, the lawn garden with its beautiful borders, the lavender walk, and the orchard with its daffodils, and when we have seen it all

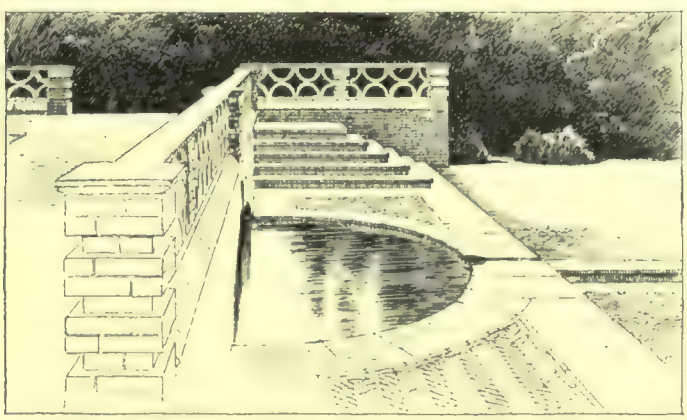


FIG. 187. THE DEANERY GARDEN

we know not which could have been spared from such a delightful scheme.

This is a real home for flowers, in herbaceous borders, in terrace walls, in water tanks, and in shady orchard. There seems a possible

habitat for everything we could desire. And as we stop to note the views in house and garden, at every step we find some fresh interest and delight which the art of the architect has been able to impart into one of the most complete schemes of its kind I have ever seen.

Nowhere do I remember to have seen any display of bedding-out plants, but in every direction there is created variety and interest in such a way that the beauty of plants and flowers is fully realized without parade or strained effects. The real object of such a garden seems to have been to find a suitable location for every single thing where

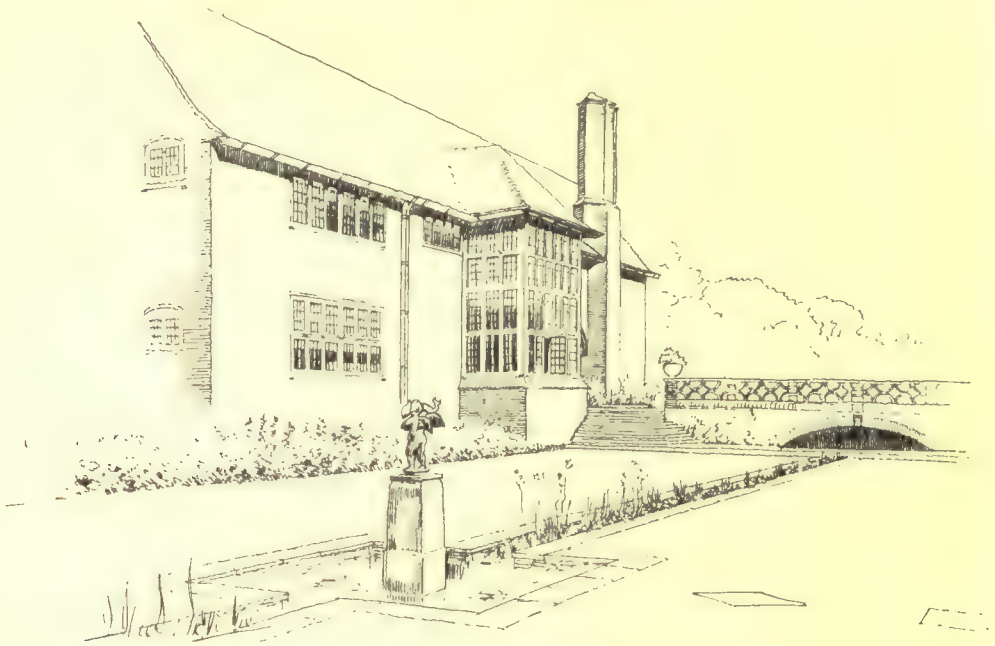


FIG. 188. THE DEANERY GARDEN

it will thrive best; and it is planned in such a way that the decorative effect is also one which counts best for the well-being of the plants. Whether it be the daffodils or other bulbs in the orchard, the saxifrages, campanulas or pinks on the terrace walls, the little hermit flowers in cracks of the pavement, the great clumps of delphinium with herbaceous borders, the magnolia on the wall of the house, the musks in the water channels, or the vine on the pergola, everything seems to have found a place for its especial advantage in growth and well-being. Where a garden can be planned like this, whilst at the same time forming a series of agreeable lines of composition round the house,

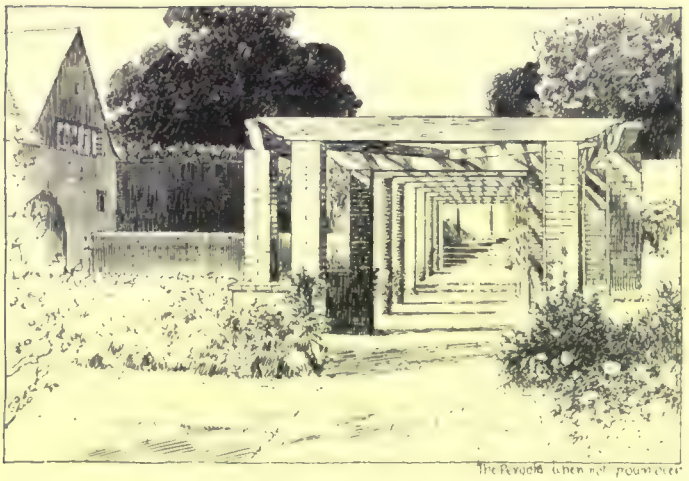


FIG. 189.

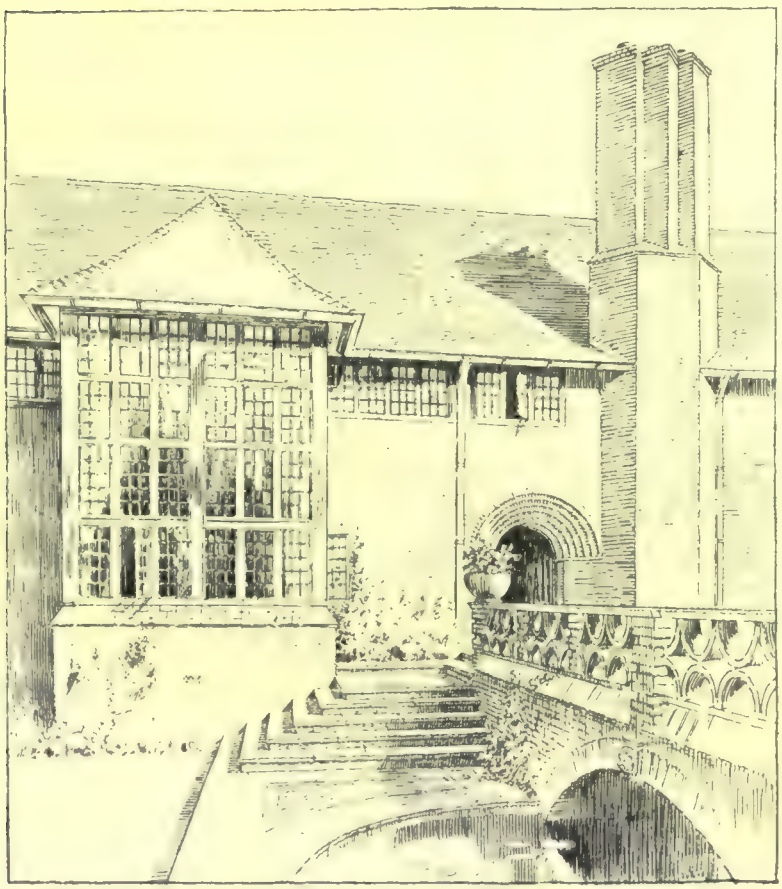


FIG. 190. THE DEANERY GARDEN

it has achieved its highest aim. Were the long water channel down the lawn merely a conceit of formal decoration it would prove far less admirable than it is here, as the best location for rock-growing plants, for the flags and iris, the forget-me-nots, the bog bean and the musk. I should think it is safe to say that few, if any, such beautiful combinations of home and garden as this exist, where the architect has controlled the whole design and where the significance of the interrelation of house and garden may be so fully realized.

BURDON HALL

ONE of the most beautiful field paths in the beautiful county of Surrey leads up through the meadows to Burdon Hall, two miles from Godalming station. The place is typical Surrey landscape with all its charm of bracken and heather, silver birches and pines, sandy soil

FIG. 191. BURDON HALL: MAURICE H. POCOCK, ARCHITECT

and fine stretches of undulating fields which gradually melt away into a far distant horizon. As you return from a first visit to this delightful country home in the glow of a sunny afternoon in late August, you incline to think that the owner of Burdon Hall has selected a site which is an ideal one of its kind.

The house stands far enough back from the road to permit of

good shelter and seclusion by the trees along the front of the site, and the gardens behind the house command a view of beautiful open landscape.

The first and most unusual feature that strikes one on entering the drive-way is the enclosure, at either side, of low red-brick walling, which gives a pleasant architectural line of formality amongst the foliage (see Fig. 191). Near the house the drive widens out to a good broad carriage turn. The low brick enclosing wall leads up to stable gates on the right and to a formal flower garden on the left. The house is already so overgrown with creepers that the architectural lines are

FIG. 192. BURDON HALL.

quite lost, and it reminds one of Lord Rosebery's house at Epsom, the Durdans, in which the signal ability of the late George Devey (who designed so many fine country houses) is completely lost under a luxuriant growth of creeper. It can hardly be considered satisfactory to bury so completely the architectural line of gables, door- and window-openings, apart from the very debatable question as to whether creepers have any real protective value. At all events architects will be glad to have a record in the illustration of the excellent proportions of mass and grouping, and of solids and voids, as designed by the architect, before they became confused by the growth of ivy.

The house spreads out long and low over the ground, and is sym-

metrically designed as regards the main block. It is just one of those simple, restful pieces of work which should be the aim of all makers of small or moderate sized country homes, and it has a simplicity of the most pleasing and unconscious sort, for one cannot forget that even

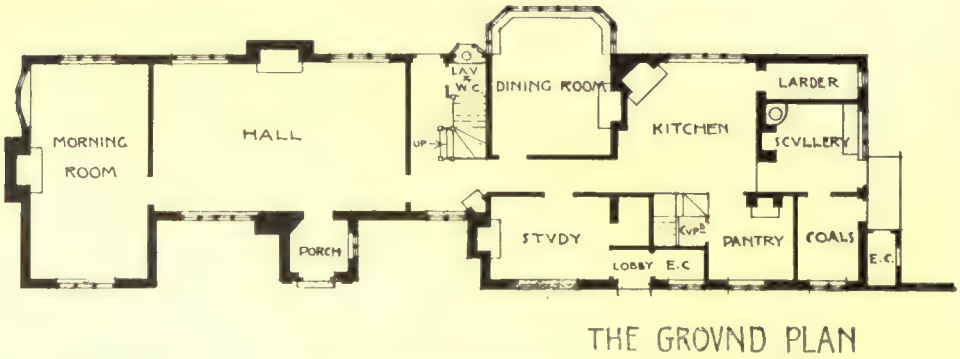


FIG. 193. BURDON HALL

simplicity may be affected sometimes. The walls are of red bricks and the roofing red tiles. The window frames are painted white, and on the ground floor have white wood shutters with pierced ornament in the upper part. As will be seen from the view of the garden front (Fig.

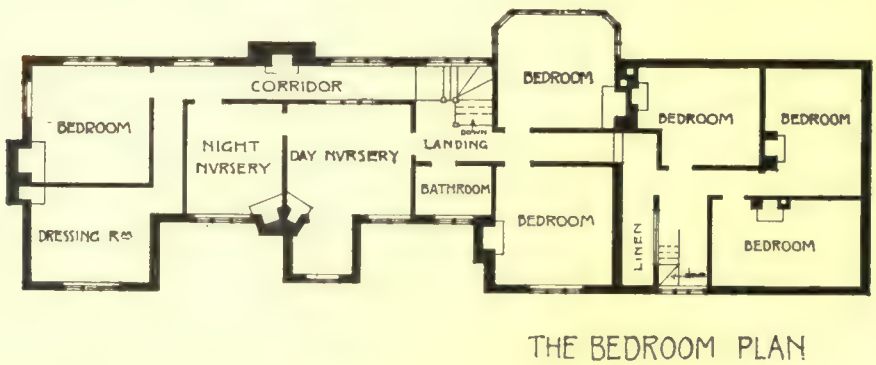


FIG. 194. BURDON HALL

192), nothing appears to have been purposely done for the sake of picturesque effect, yet the result is very pleasing.

The plan of the house is an oblong of nearly a hundred feet by an average width of about twenty-eight feet (see Figs. 193 and 194). A small porch leads direct into a large hall parlour, measuring thirty feet by seventeen feet six inches, so that it would accommodate a billiard

table. To the left, this opens into a withdrawing-room twenty-six feet by fourteen feet, with good windows at each end and at one side. To the right is the staircase hall, with a garden entrance, and still to the

FIG. 195. BURDON HALL

right, on either side of the corridor, are a dining-room seventeen feet by fourteen feet, and a study fourteen feet by ten feet. The dining-room is conveniently placed for service from the kitchen, and the study might be changed into a butler's pantry. Upstairs the bedrooms fall into two groups, for the family, and for servants and children. There

is a fireplace in the main corridor upstairs, and from this corridor the outlook is delightful.

The inside of the house is treated in a very simple way, and beyond the fireplaces and the staircase there is nothing of constructive

FIG. 196. BURDON HALL

decoration. The fireplace in the hall has fine old carved panelling built above it to the ceiling (see Fig. 195). That in the dining-room has some very interesting rich old carved oak work, and above it is a decorated cove in modelled plaster, with wild horses and foliage, and a central shield with the owner's coat of arms and the motto *Nil Dimidia.*

The modelling is admirably executed. The author of this capital piece of plaster work was Mr. Godfrey Blount (see Fig. 196).

The drawing-room has a large panelled chimney-breast with glazed cupboards, crowned by a flat plaster cove decorated with modelled reliefs of three ships in full sail; the effect being thoroughly pleasing, and very happy in its proportion. This work also was executed by Mr. Blount (see Fig. 197). The room is decorated in dainty shades of green, and is cool and restful in effect.

FIG. 197. BURDON HALL

Nothing, of course, would be easier than to obtain a variety of decorative effects in such a house as this by the aid of the many admirable decorative materials everywhere available. But there is this to be said about any special scheme of decoration, that one is very apt to tire of it after a time and desire a change (which is good for trade), and it is pleasant, too, to air one's fancies now and again by fresh schemes of decoration. A house of good design will look well with simple whitewashed walls, or with decorated wall fabrics, or with more permanent constructive decoration. But a badly designed house will

need much cleverly executed decoration to make it look passable. The rooms at Burdon Hall will suggest an air of grateful tranquillity to those who are satisfied with simple, quiet treatment. The chief point of interest in each room is the fireplace. The fire-grates themselves are those charming Anglo-Japanese designs by the late Thomas Jekyll, than which nothing better has been done in modern times.

The plan of the ground (see Fig. 198) indicates that the whole of the gardening scheme has been well thought out, to fit into the rising

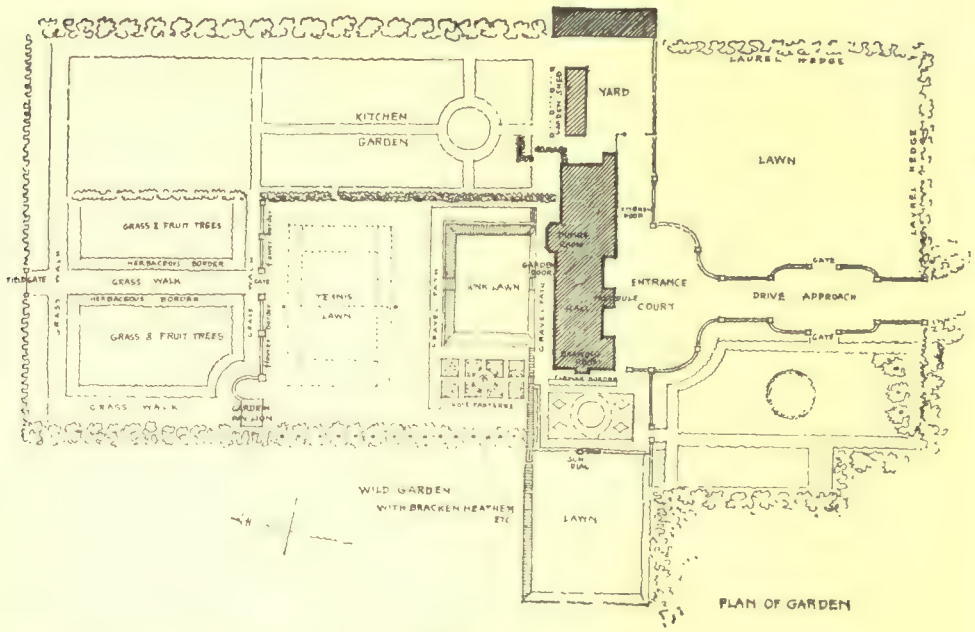


FIG. 198. BURDON HALL

level of ground towards the back—some three or four feet. There are four separate lawns, and their enclosures and varying levels help to give interest to the design.

A pleasant feature of the garden is the range of silver birches which fringe the western boundary of the tennis lawn, and produce a long line of tree enclosure of chestnuts, etc., extending right away to the end of the site. On the northern side of the tennis lawn a low wall enclosure, similar to that along the entrance drive, divides off the orchard, and continues across from the great evergreen hedge on the east up to a nice little brick garden pavilion on the west. This

garden house is an excellent feature and one that should be adopted wherever possible. An admirable example of this is at Netherheys (illustrated in this book) where, at the end of the terrace, is a delightful little garden house of brick and oak in which one may enjoy after dinner a pleasant retreat such as is available at all seasons of the year. The weather during autumn and winter often permits the use of such a

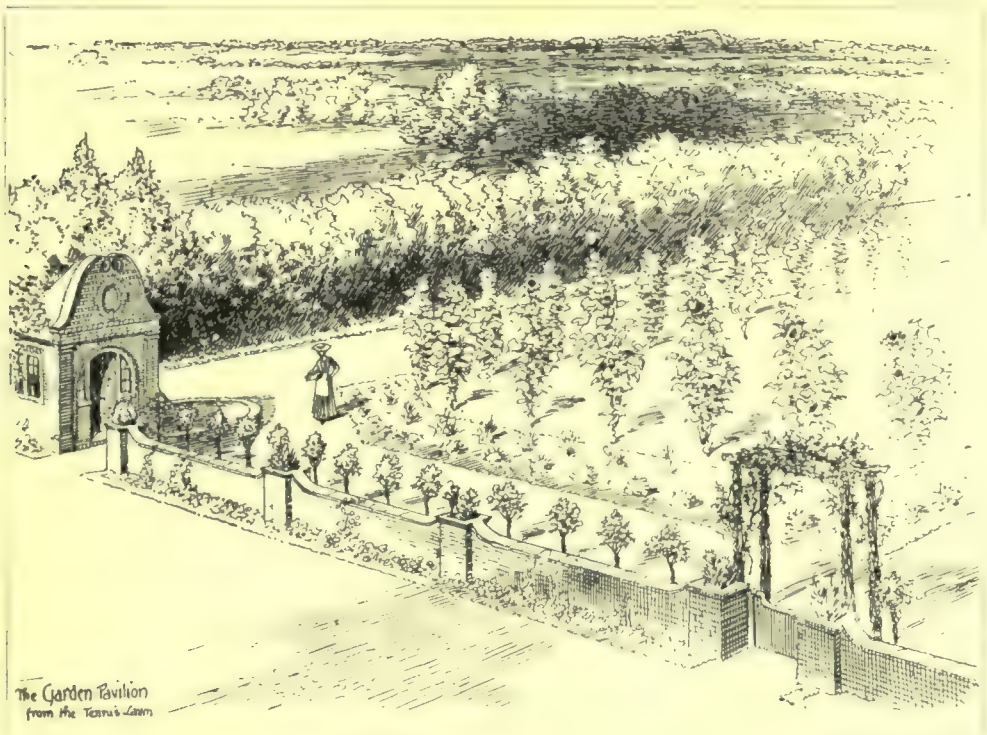


FIG. 199. BURDON HALL

garden house if it is provided with curtains and removable lead light window panes.

The picture of the garden at Burdon Hall which has left the strongest impression with me, is the view looking across the tennis lawn towards the dainty little red brick pavilion, linked up to the evergreen hedge on the east by the red brick wall with tiled coping and low square piers at intervals (see Fig. 199). The tops of these piers contain a bed of soil in which various plants are growing vigorously. Describing the garden as I first saw it there was growing all along the border on the tennis court side of the wall a bright mass of nasturtiums in full

flower. Behind the wall was a row of standard rose trees, and across the green walk beyond a herbaceous border backed up with a long line of giant sunflowers. Behind this again are the orchard trees, and, for a background to all, the line of silver birches and other luxuriant foliage. It is a charming piece of garden design, and one capable of being changed with varying effects year by year. With the first view of such a charming garden before you, it is not surprising that you are inclined to think that English gardens, even when on a comparatively small scale, are not to be beaten the world over. To not a few folk nowadays the beauties of our fine old gardens are well known, but many of these have cost thousands of pounds, and absorbed the devotion of lives to their production; moreover, they can, after all, be enjoyed by comparatively few people. But gardens such as this one are well within the reach of thousands, who may produce them within five to ten years' time at a moderate outlay.

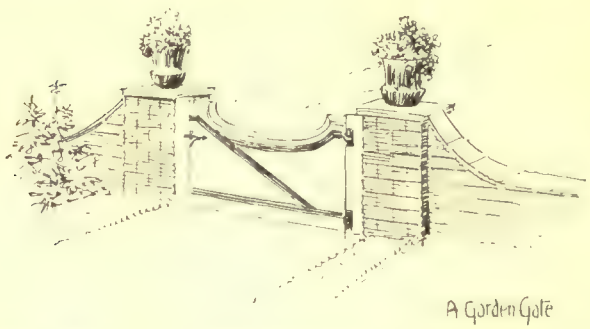


FIG. 200. BURDON HALL

Those who have had the privilege of looking over many fine gardens in England, both old and new, and have spent a day in Miss Jekyll's lovely garden at Munstead Wood can form some conception of the further possibilities of garden design, but this perfection need not involve any disheartening of our effort to produce humbler and simpler effects, for the first essentials of good design are not altogether bound up with questions of size and cost. Small gardens may be treated in a large manner, whilst large gardens are often fritted away in very small methods. For those who do not know, there is plenty of good advice at hand nowadays.

The initial scheme and design of a garden, at small cost, can be easily obtained either from architects or from lady gardeners, who have here a useful and pleasant occupation. The architect, if he be an artist, should always be able to arrange the general garden plan in relation to the house in such a manner as to enhance the effect of both, but after this general design has been settled, there is immense opportunity for

the taste and discretion of the amateur. Moreover, by the exercise of some thought and care, a garden will provide occupation for almost every season, and nothing is more interesting in the dullest weeks of the year, when flowers are out of the question, than the making of terraces, ponds, pergolas, arbours, and tanks. They are fortunate indeed who possess ground like Miss Jekyll's, where laminated stone is to be had for the digging, and the making of dry walls is an easy delight. Much, however, may be accomplished with heather, turf, or flints as a basis. If it were realized how much can be done by a limited and judicious use of concrete and cement, a good deal more enterprise would be bestowed on gardens. House design and garden design have a natural affinity for each other, but both have suffered severely for a century past from a lack of ideas and initiative which nowadays, however, bid fair to be even too exuberant.

FLAGCOURT

THIS house forms a good illustration of the great improvement which has come over many of our suburban homes where it has been thought worth while to obtain the services of a capable architect, instead of leaving the result to the taste of the speculating owner or builder. In the bulk of the new suburban houses, of course, we see only the hand of the latter, and as this looms largely in the public eye, the advance in architecture is apt to be measured by the general public from the worst examples.

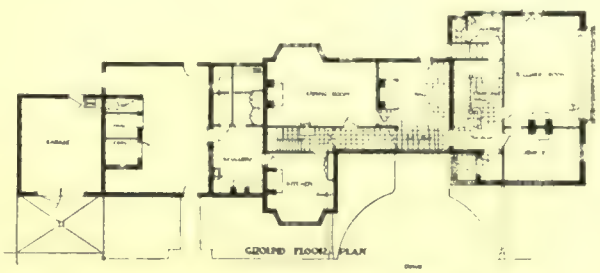


FIG. 201. FLAGCOURT (GROUND FLOOR): COLLCUTT AND HAMP, ARCHITECTS

The usual thing is a hotch-potch of features copied from better work, with an entire absence of good proportion, and a vulgar insistence on stupid and meaningless ornament. Far better than this stuff are the quiet and modest effects of traditional work of what are styled

the Queen Anne and Georgian periods. It may lack variety and interest, but it is at least sane, homely, and innocent of fuss and swagger, as befits the private house. One has only to contrast the quiet homeliness of the old houses in the countryside almost anywhere in England with the average suburban home to realize how completely the tradition of sensible and artistic building has been lost. Those charming little groups of red brick and tile buildings which adorn the farms in Surrey and Sussex, and the quaint, low-spreading stone houses of old Lancashire and Yorkshire, with mullioned windows and stone roofs, do not shout their charms

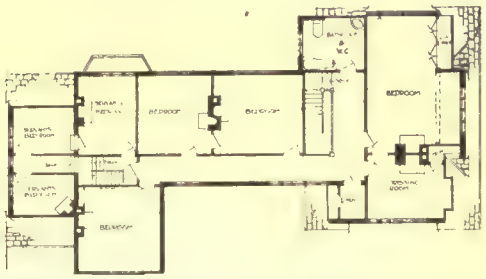


FIG. 202. FLAGCOURT. UPPER FLOOR

FIG. 203. FLAGCOURT. THE DINING ROOM

and attractions as we come upon them, but blend in delightful restfulness with the landscape. Meaningless gables built up to contain—nothing; spikey turrets and dormer windows; ingenious excrescences which have no justification either for use or beauty, are the things

with which suburban buildings have familiarized us, and though the great bulk of it is due to the ignorance of the unprofessional, it must

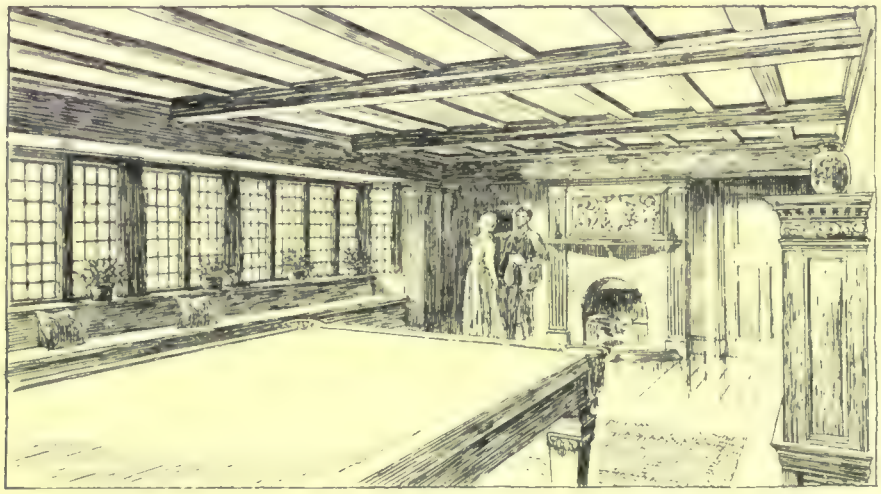


FIG. 204. FLAGCOURT. THE BILLIARD ROOM

be admitted that architects are not as a class free from blame. Yet if the public will insist on having homelike homes, free from vulgar swagger and false affectations of art, they can certainly be supplied,

FIG. 205. FLAGCOURT. THE HALL

for we can reckon nowadays on a fairly large supply of architectural skill which is content to do honest, unpretentious and simple artistic building of houses, instead of trying to make every new house outvie

its neighbour in uncommon treatment, to secure as large a share of notice as possible.

The country home here illustrated has not been designed for exhibition purposes, and it is not an attempt to secure attention by anything uncommon in plan or elevation, but it is an example of every-day practice from the work of a busy architect. Flagcourt has been

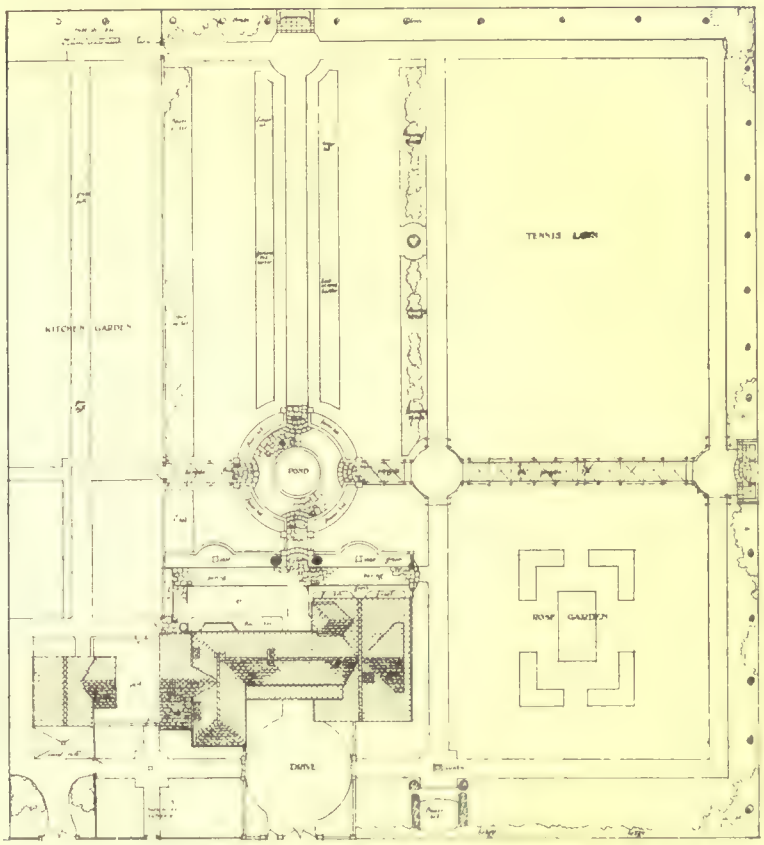


FIG. 206. FLAGCOURT. PLAN OF GARDEN

built at Tadworth, which may be classed as suburban London, though it is some sixteen miles from London Bridge.

Tadworth is 600 feet above sea level, has a gravel soil, a good supply of water, and a fine breezy common of some 2,600 acres. What could one wish for more, so long as it is easy to get at? In an interesting little booklet on the place, Mr. Charles Ford says that in a 1595 map Tadworth is marked together with Beachworth (Betchworth)

and Darcking (Dorking). The lord of the manor of Tadworth was William de Braiose, and is mentioned in Doomsday Book. There are

FIG. 207. FLAGCOURT

FIG. 208. FLAGCOURT

fine views from Tadworth, and altogether it is one of the desirable localities for modest country homes.

If my readers consult the plan (see Figs. 201 and 202) they will

see that the changing conditions of modern life are recognized at Flagcourt in the making of a hall parlour and bringing the billiard-room within the general economy, encouraging its use as a parlour instead of ostracizing it by leading down to it through a long disconnecting corridor, or otherwise placing it as much in the background as possible.

The dining-room and kitchen service are well placed, and the enclosed yard space leading up to garage or coach-house has the pleasant result in the elevational treatment of spreading the general group of building in agreeable and picturesque fashion.

My sketches give some idea of the sensible and simple treatment

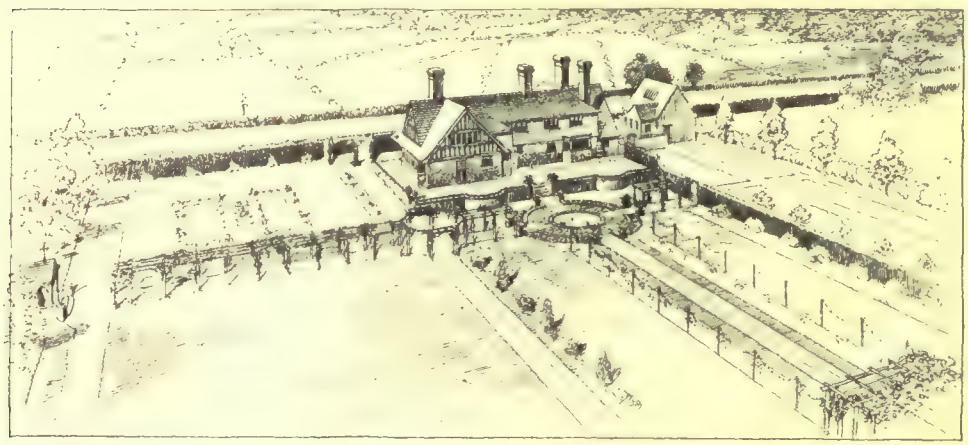


FIG. 209. FLAGCOURT. BIRD'S EYE VIEW

of the interior, showing enough of constructional decoration to give interest without any too great reliance on the adventitious aid of paper and paint (see Figs. 203, 204, and 205). In these pleasant interiors we have broad-spreading windows suited to the country view, and the low proportions so conducive to an effect of cosiness and comfort. A home like this only needs to be furnished with tasteful simplicity to be as good in its way as the finest home in the land.

The materials for the exterior are stucco walls, with a brown stone slating on the roofs, which tone well together, and the chimneys are built of a brownish red brick, harmonizing with the stone roofing.

The garden promises well. As the whole site is less than two acres, the treatment is simple, and no attempt has been made to get

too much out of it. A terrace surrounds the house on two sides, and below this on the south side there is a stone pond, with stone flagging round and down from the terrace. Pergolas cover the long paths which lead across the ground to two garden houses which will form pleasant features from the house (see Fig. 206).

To illustrate the effect of the group, I have given sketches from each end of the entrance front (see Figs. 207 and 208), and the appearance of the other front of the house is indicated in my bird's-eye view (Fig. 209), but one of the best results is looking down the pathway from the pond directly towards the south front.

LUCKLEY, WOKINGHAM

WHEN a house is built in a close environment of trees, so that any comprehensive view of it can only be obtained from a short distance, the necessity for a broad and dignified treatment is perhaps less apparent than for those buildings which stand right out in the open, and which may be compared in bulk and form with large natural

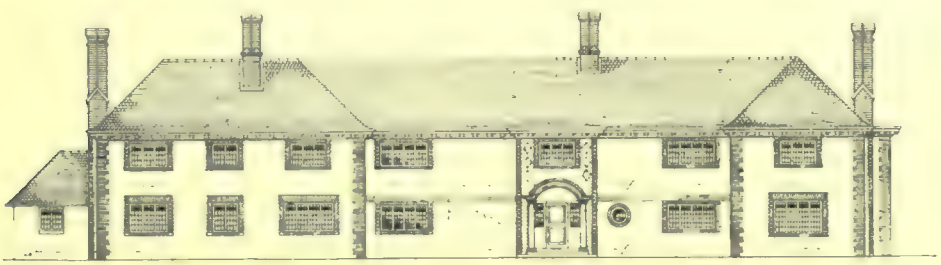


FIG. 210. LUCKLEY (ENTRANCE FRONT): ERNEST NEWTON, ARCHITECT

objects, or great spaces of land or water. But the charm of a long, low-spreading house is nearly always apparent on a country site, and, seen through a perspective of tall trees, such a mass and outline as that in Luckley is very pleasing, and effective by force of contrast between the vertical lines of tree trunks and the long, horizontal mass of the building blocks.

There is no indication of the Luckley house at the entrance

lodge, but gradually, as we approach through the wood, its long, low mass of red tells through the tree perspective, and we appreciate the pleasing effect of the variously toned surfaces of red walls and roofs

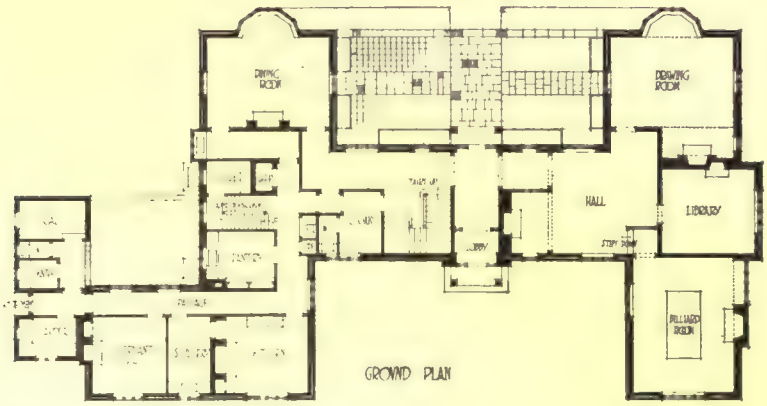


FIG. 211.

which strike a note of warm colour and peaceful simplicity, making an essentially right expression for a country house. The approach is so arranged that the drive comes up to the centre of the entrance front (shown in elevation, Fig. 210) from the wood, and we at once note the

FIG. 212. LUCKLEY

symmetry of the composition, which is centred by the white porch in a wide setting of plain wall surface.

To both main fronts of the house we have a similar plan arrangement, with flanking projecting wings at either end, and a white porch

in the centre. On the garden front the recessed centre is paved with red-tiled walks between the stone flagging and flower borders, the object being to provide a pleasant lounging space and sun trap. The development of the garden promises great possibilities, as it is carefully and gradually evolved from the formal surroundings of the house towards the woodland and wild garden beyond. There is a considerable sinking in the ground to the east side, which will make a delightful sunk garden.

FIG. 213. LUCKLEY

It will have been noted that two nearly similar plans of houses are made to produce very different effects by the general interior design, and the plan of Luckley, whilst following very closely on a type of plan which is familiar enough, has formed the basis for some fresh and individual treatment (see Figs. 211 and 212). The two entrance porches lead into a vestibule which crosses the centre block of the house from front to back. The stairs are enclosed to the east, and beyond this the corridor, which crosses from the hall, leads to the dining-room, in the eastern wing, projecting on the garden side. Northward of this we find the cloakroom and pantry, and stretching

out to the north is a large wing, containing the kitchen offices. Thus the dining-room and kitchen block are well removed from the other entertaining rooms.

At the west side of the central vestibule we have the large hall parlour, with a comfortable ingle-nook, and beyond this the drawing-room in the south-west wing. The billiard-room is in the north-west wing, and the study comes between this and the drawing-room. The billiard-room is approached down three steps from the corner of the

FIG. 214. LUCKLEY

hall, to afford greater height. On referring to the plan, it will be seen that windows look out over the recessed court on the garden front, both from the dining-room and the drawing-room, and these afford interesting side views of the house.

Having followed the progress of Mr. Ernest Newton's work for a good many years, it appears to me a striking tribute to his ability as an architect that his designs wear well, and the interest we feel in them is of a kind that lasts. He has, of course, had his fling at several varieties of design, and has followed many of our earlier and more picturesque types than this of Luckley. But this last is of especial

interest as carrying forward that type of design which obtained just before we began to lose touch with tradition. Shortly after the period which this house represents, we began to flounder in a sea of misguided revivals of Classic which reduced the real interest of domestic architecture to the lowest ebb ever seen in England. Readers will notice that the design now illustrated is very English in feeling, and though it is very orderly, restrained, and symmetrical in its exterior, so as to produce a good feeling of breadth and some dignity, it has yet a cosy homelike look, with something of that real distinction of emphasis which makes our old buildings so attractive (see Fig. 213). In spite of (or because of) the immense number of houses Mr. Newton has designed, each succeeding effort may be counted upon to possess some individuality of expression.

FIG. 215. LUCKLEY. A BEDROOM FIREPLACE

As for the inside, much that might be remarked for quality is a matter of general proportions and simplicity of treatment which would not count for much in illustration. My sketch of the hall is only one of two or three good points of view possible in that apartment, and is given to show how the corridor effect is produced past each side of the vestibule. It will be seen that by semicircular vaulting, faced by wood architraves, the corridor effect is produced up to the face of the ingle-nook. The cross views from the hall are charming—out towards the entrance court on one side, and across the lawn towards the wood on the other.

The drawing-room is distinguished by a very happily proportioned ingle-nook and fireplace, which is framed in by detached columns and beams. All the woodwork is finished white, and there is a moulded

marble architrave to the fireplace (see Fig. 214). The billiard-room fireplace is built up of fine old carved woodwork. The staircase railing, instead of the ordinary balusters, has a filling of latticed woodwork.

The stair hall opens out very agreeably on to wide landings and corridors on the upper level. One of the bedroom fireplaces is illustrated as an example of detail in the upper part of the house. This mantel-piece is built up in woodwork, which is painted white, and a dainty colour effect is obtained by some beautiful green veined Connemara marble in the architrave and curb to the fireplace. The tile surround and hearth are in a nice textured white tile and the grate frame is in brass (see Fig. 215).

This house is one of those happy results where the definite wishes of the clients in a certain direction have been very fully realized by the architect. It is to be feared that few clients have very definite ideas as to what they really want; and, doubtless, in very many instances the house is somewhat of a surprise to them when it is finally complete. One cannot doubt, however, that distinct wishes and limitations often act as a spur to the architect, and are really helpful in the evolution of a satisfactory design. Luckley may certainly be counted amongst the best efforts of an architect who has had a large share in the development of modern domestic architecture.

THE CROFT

THE CROFT was designed and built for the architect's own residence. The garden, by reason of its initial design, is full of interest, and the house is doubly interesting for its own sake, and for the exceptional way in which it is furnished. No description of the garden, no index of the contents of the house, and no illustrations of the various rooms can fully define the special charm of the home which has been created. As it stands it undoubtedly reveals the artistic personality of the designer, and the history of the creation and completion of such a home is full of interest. The house grew considerably beyond the first intentions, but the gradual acquisition of its beautiful and in many cases unique contents might be described as a

triumph of well-directed thought and effort. Pages could be filled with illustrations of clocks, cabinets, chairs, pottery, metal-work, and pictures, which form a collection of quite exceptional value, but the abiding recollection of the visitor to The Croft will be the charm of its formal garden. The central and most striking feature of the house is its long hall parlour, and to the successful result of the general design of both house and garden there remains a memory of such a finish and furnishing as few are able to realize in their homes.

The design of a house often conveys the suggestion that the plan has been dominated by the elevation; that the desire to produce some particular treatment or feature in elevation has been allowed to control the laying out of the plan. At The Croft there is nothing which does not seem to be the natural outcome of the plan simply expressed in elevational treatment. As the two main fronts of the house face pretty nearly north and south the three chief entertaining rooms have been placed along the south front and the fourth at the east end, the north front being occupied by the entrance, kitchen offices, etc. (see Fig. 216). The features of the exterior are the entrance court on the north and the fine terraced garden on the south. The exterior of the house is a pleasingly simple piece of English domestic design. The walls are largely finished in rough-cast; the ground floor windows built in stone, and the roofs covered with tiles. The entrance front has a quaint and cosy effect as one approaches it between the big trees on Totteridge Green. A small enclosure is screened off from the green, and a piece of square garden court is traversed by a red-tiled pathway leading

FIG. 216. THE CROFT: T. E. COLLCUTT, ARCHITECT

from the wrought-iron entrance gate to the doorway, lined by formal evergreens in tubs, whilst an archway leads through the western wing to the stable yard (see Fig. 217).

From the vestibule we enter the large hall place, which is strikingly effective (see Figs. 218 and 221). Its forty feet length is emphasized by the lines of beams and the range of stone-mullioned windows which look out to the terrace verandah; and the wealth of beautiful old furniture completes a picture interior such as one seldom sees. Italian and Jacobean cabinets, old clocks, quaint old chairs and

FIG. 217. THE CROFT

metalwork, beautiful pottery and lacquer ware, charming statuettes and pictures meet the eye at every turn in this charming home. It is a signally successful result of the building of an entirely modern home, with some distinctive character of the architect's own hand, in a traditional English method, furnished almost completely with old furniture which has been gathered together with taste and judgement. To one who can estimate the value of old things from an artistic standpoint the house (and indeed the garden as well) affords almost the interest of a museum, so varied and pleasing is the collection which the architect's discrimination has brought together.

The dining-room and drawing-room have each broad bay-windows looking on to either end of the upper terrace, and from them are obtained charming views of wooded country. The site of the house is bounded on either side by large trees, and these, with the house itself, form an excellent setting to the terraced garden (see Fig. 219), along the southern end of which grows a range of poplars. When the garden is filled with flowers it makes a fine picture from the higher terrace. The central walk, some two hundred and fifty feet long, leads to a

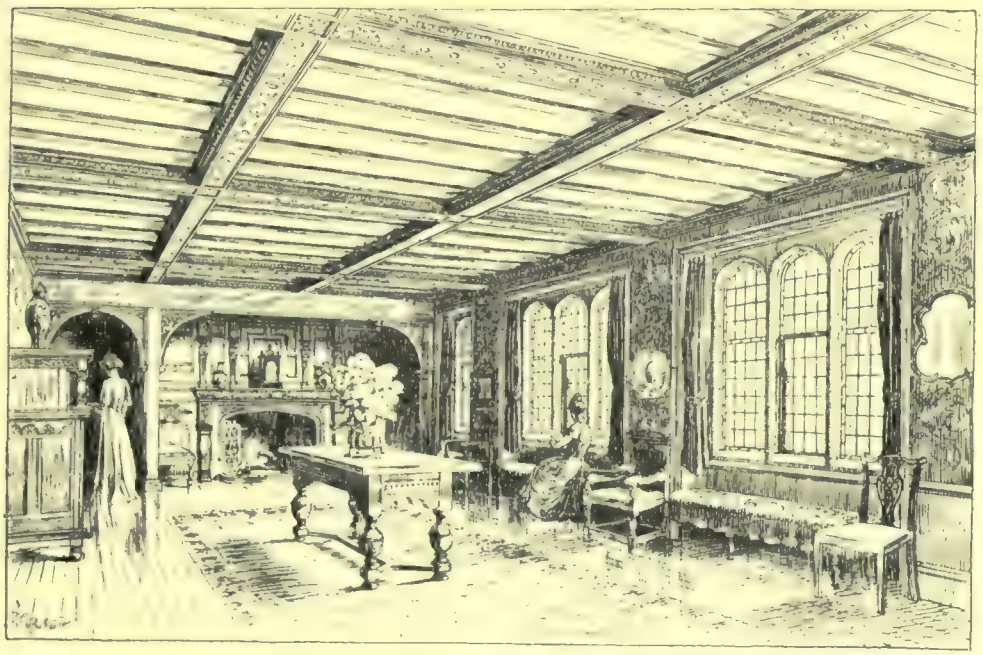


FIG. 218. THE CROFT. THE HALL

pond, in the centre of which is a fountain (see Fig. 220). This is enclosed by clipped hedges and beyond that is a garden shelter built of oak framing with plaster panels. Two other garden shelters of quaint design form points of interest at the north-west and north-east angles. A long pergola comes naturally (not dragged in as they so often are), leading from the lower terrace to above the rockery on the edge of the tennis lawn. It will be noted that beds and grass paths alternate in the lower part of the garden, and the effect of this is very good. In the centre of the pond before named is a capitally modelled figure of a triton, by Henry Pegram, A.R.A., and the basin of the pond is enclosed by a

broad stone curb. The effect of this pond and fountain, with the summer-house and row of poplars beyond, suggests something of the effects to be found in old Italian gardens.

To the eye of a layman the plan of such a garden as this will possibly appear most forbiddingly formal. But it must be borne in mind that straight lines and squared spaces never look so formal in reality, and that this was eminently a case for the development of a formal garden (see Fig. 222). In such a space as is here available nothing could be obtained productive of such striking effect as the development of formal lines. In proportion to the extent and domin-

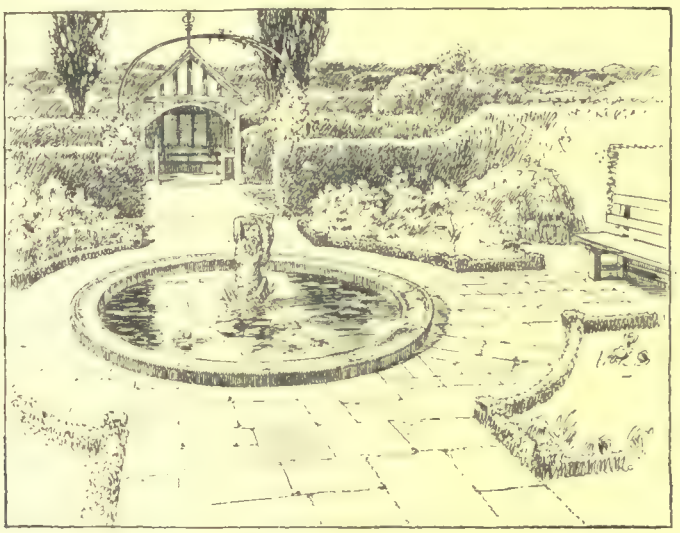


FIG. 220. THE CROFT. THE POND AND GARDEN HOUSE

ance of the house building itself so must the continuation of formal lines in gardening extend, and a long house like this, standing high above the garden, is a dominating factor all over the site. To realize the value of a well-ordered formal scheme like this, one has only to view it from the upper terrace, looking down over the whole arrangement, or to realize the excellent effect looking up from the southern end, where the long central path extends upwards from the pond to the flights of terrace steps. The long, low proportion of the house terminating the vista up this long pathway is an impression of much value. Of course a garden like this is somewhat costly both to make and to keep up, but then it is in proportion to the house. Were the house

FIG. 220. GARDEN FRONT

FIG. 221. THE CROFT. A CORNER OF THE HALL

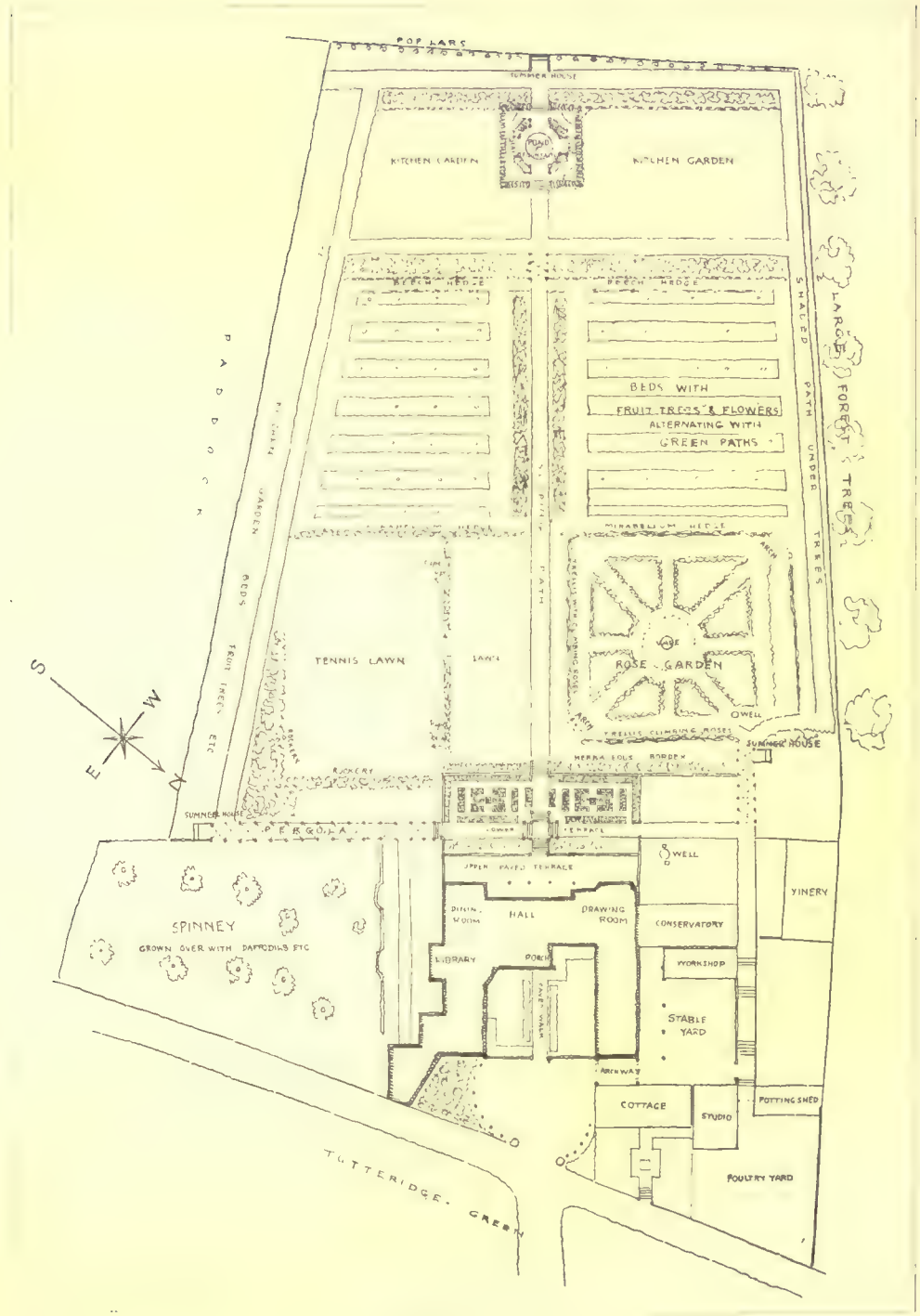


FIG. 222. THE CROFT. PLAN OF GARDENS

smaller, the long formal lines and the elaboration of parts might easily overbalance it.

With a general survey of its design the interest of such a delightful garden as this is not exhausted. On the upper terrace wall we find Spanish vases inlaid with mosaics of beautiful colour. Other fine old pots and an admirable terra-cotta bas-relief by Bertram Pegram adorn the house wall under the verandah.

On the next terrace down there are two little garden parterres east and west. In the centre of that to the east is a sundial, and in that to the west a charming little fountain, the central figure of a boy being one of the most graceful works of Henry Pegram, A.R.A. (see Fig. 223). On the small lower lawn is a pedestal supporting what looks like a little leaden vase, but which is a chemist's mortar, the largest I have seen, some fifteen inches high. It was bought in Spain by Mr. Collcutt and weighs just about one hundredweight; it is dated 1640.

FIG. 223. THE CROFT. FOUNTAIN BY H. PEGRAM, A.R.A.

The library is lined with fixed bookcases up to within two feet or so of the ceiling, and the frieze is covered with a dainty tree pattern in low tones of green. The woodwork is finished in a golden brown. The bay window across one end of the room looks out to the spinney, and there is another window with fixed window seat looking towards the south.

The dining-room woodwork is painted white, with the exception of ceiling beams and rafters, which are a dark brown. An oak-leaf pattern leather paper lacquered in brown covers the walls, with a low dado painted a dark green. The fireplace is framed in with a red marble lintel and sides, enclosing grate cheeks of blue, purple, and green tiles; the canopy is of brass.

The drawing-room has a plaster ceiling divided into panels by moulded ribs with small pendants at intersections, and the panels are decorated with low relief modelling, the larger ones having peacocks

with outspread tails, and the smaller angle ones showing cherubs' heads with trumpets. The walls are covered with a dull gold lacquer paper without pattern, and the overmantel is finished entirely in gold.

SOLOM'S COURT

AS you follow the winding road between well-wooded hills, after leaving Chipstead station, you realize that there still exists one unspoilt corner of our beautiful Surrey. Climbing the sloping ground of the common which lies below Solom's Court, you feel that it was a happy idea to choose the crest of this hill for a country home. To any one fresh from Wales or Scotland these gentle slopes would not perhaps be dignified by the name of hills, yet they rise to heights which command charming peeps of wooded and undulating country. If you enter the grounds of Solom's Court by the wicket gate leading from the common (see Fig. 224), and, after following the various paths that encircle the terraces and gardens, wander through the beech wood out to the open view at the north end of the site, you will admit that few places could have been more happily selected to afford charm and variety within such a comparatively small compass. From here you have a delightful prospect to the east, where, between wooded slopes, you may discern in the distance the former residence of Horace Walpole. It is difficult to imagine anything more pleasing and restful in the way of quiet woodland scenery than the view from the lawn through the beech trees which fringe the slope between it and the common on the south side.

FIG. 224. SOLOM'S COURT (ENTRANCE FROM COMMON): E. GUY DAWBER, ARCHITECT

The site is a particularly pleasing one, as on the north and east it is bounded by a wood which has been worked into a garden scheme, and the fall of the ground towards the common enabled the gardens to be planned in a series of lawns and terraces one above the other, connected by walls and flights of steps. A broad terrace is taken at some considerable elevation above the tennis lawn, and this terrace rises again at the west end to one still longer, leading to a pergola. Our plan

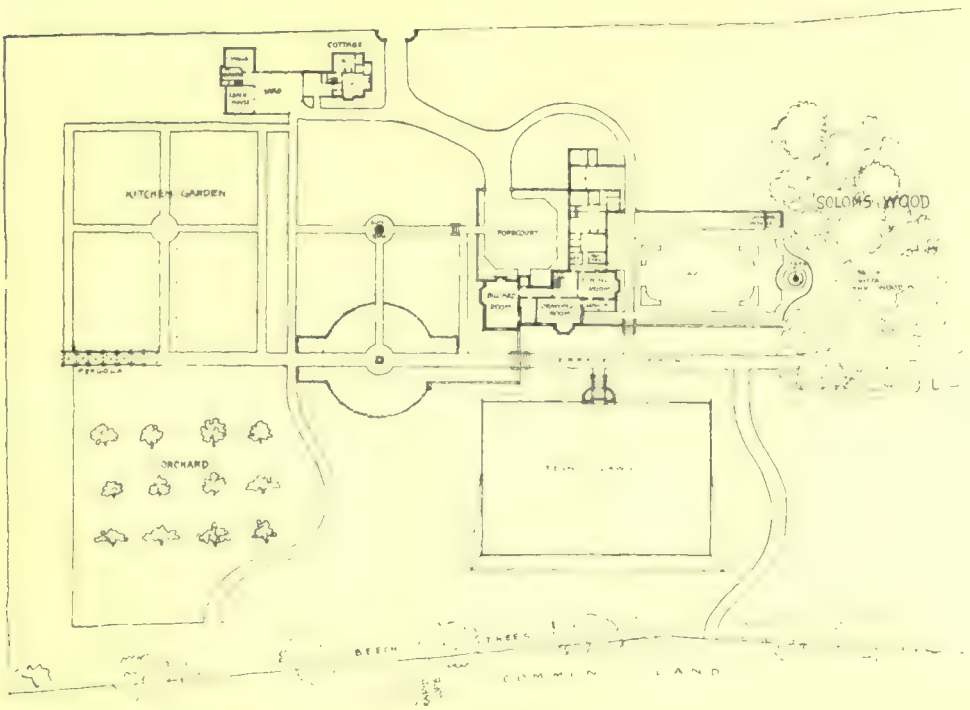


FIG. 225. SOLOM'S COURT

(see Fig. 225) indicates the general scheme of the garden, which is treated with a few long formal lines leading from and round the house. Viewed from the long terrace of the garden front the general grouping of the house is picturesque and well-balanced, the loggia between the parlour and dining-room, with the tall flanking chimney-stack, affording a good point of interest to the centre of the composition (see Fig. 226).

The approach from the road on the northern side passes the lodge and stables, and leads to a forecourt and entrance, so arranged as to screen the gardens from people coming to the house. This forecourt is

FIG. 226. VIEW FROM GARDEN

FIG. 227. SOLOM'S COURT. ENTRANCE FRONT

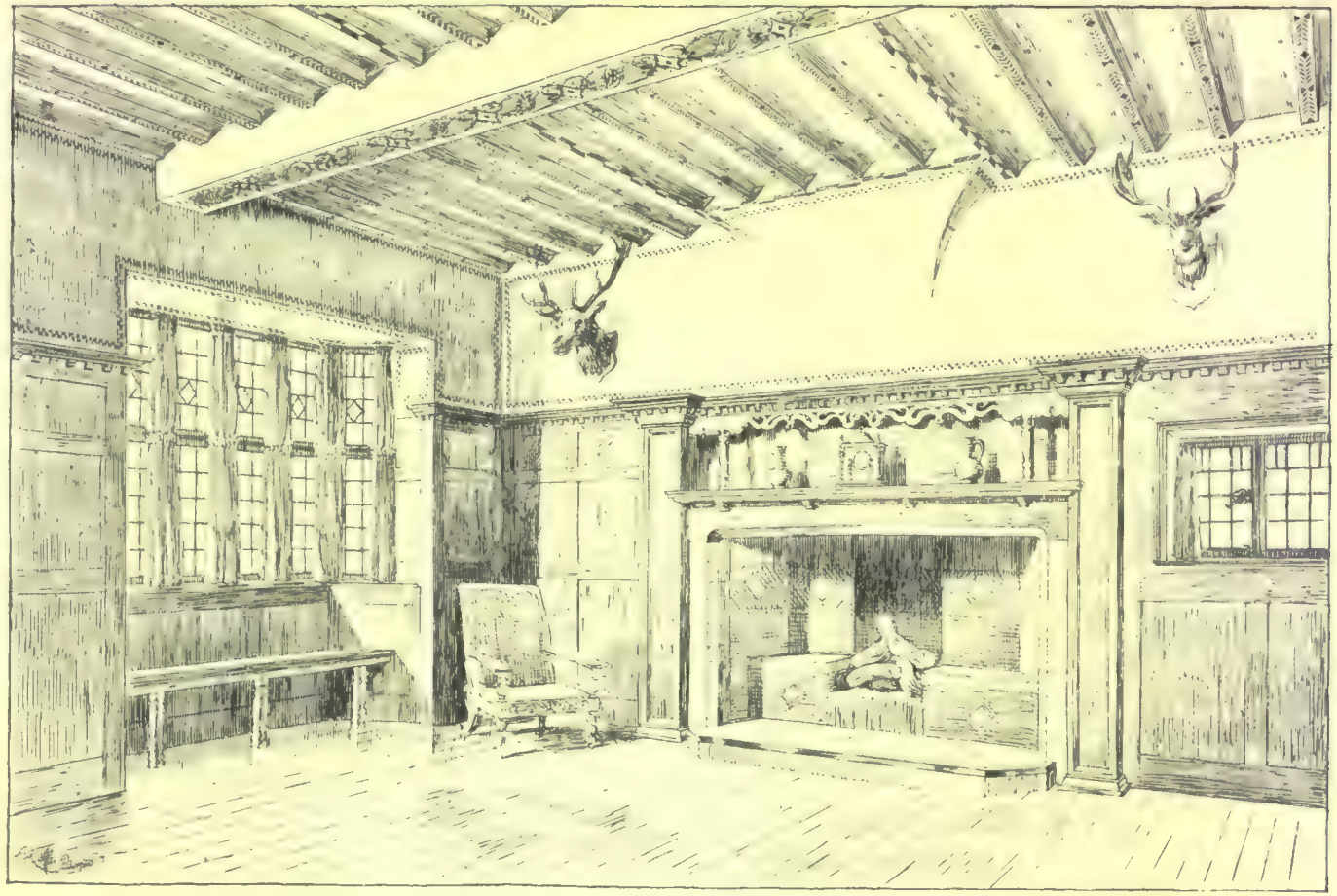


FIG. 228. SOLOM'S COURT. THE BILLIARD ROOM

separated from the gardens by a low brick wall with panels filled with half-round tiles, a treatment repeated in the terrace walling (see Fig. 227).

The gardens have all been arranged to afford the best views, and yet to get as much shelter as it is possible during the time the trees grow up. The ground opposite the dining-room, merging into the beech wood on the east, is sheltered by a high wall from the rough north wind, and makes a delightfully sunny garden. By taking advantage of the natural features of the site and working them into the general scheme, what might have been a commonplace garden has already some considerable charm and character.

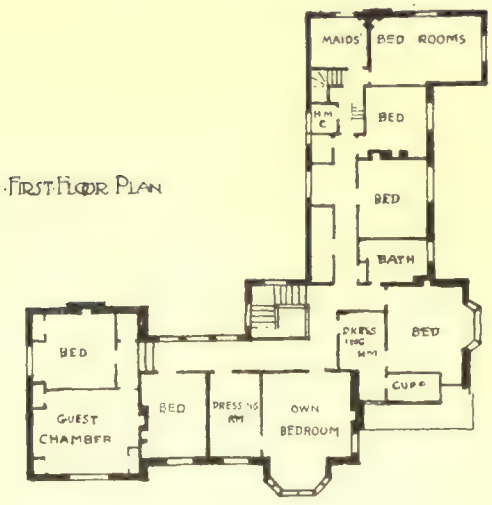


FIG. 229. SOLOM'S COURT

The house is faced externally with gray Crowborough bricks, the soft purplish tones blending harmoniously with the red brick dressings to the angles and windows. The upper portion is finished in a warm cream rough cast, and the roof is covered with hand-made Kentish tiles, which soon mellow to a deep rich colour. The window frames are of wood, with the parlour bay in stone, and all are filled with lead light glazing, slightly relieved from the simple squares in the upper parts with shaped panes at intervals.

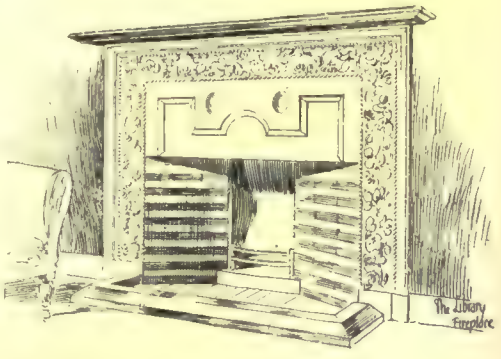


FIG. 230. SOLOM'S COURT

The whole exterior has been kept as quiet and simple as possible. The entrance lodge and stables are planned in a similar way and built of the same materials as the house, so that there is no jarring note anywhere, and one blends pleasantly with the other.

The plan of Solom's Court is L-shaped, and has one good point

which is quickly noted, and that is the pleasant effect of the long corridor leading from the porch to the staircase hall, so that this latter is at a good distance from the main entrance. The development of this arrangement above makes a good bedroom plan (see Figs. 225 and 229).

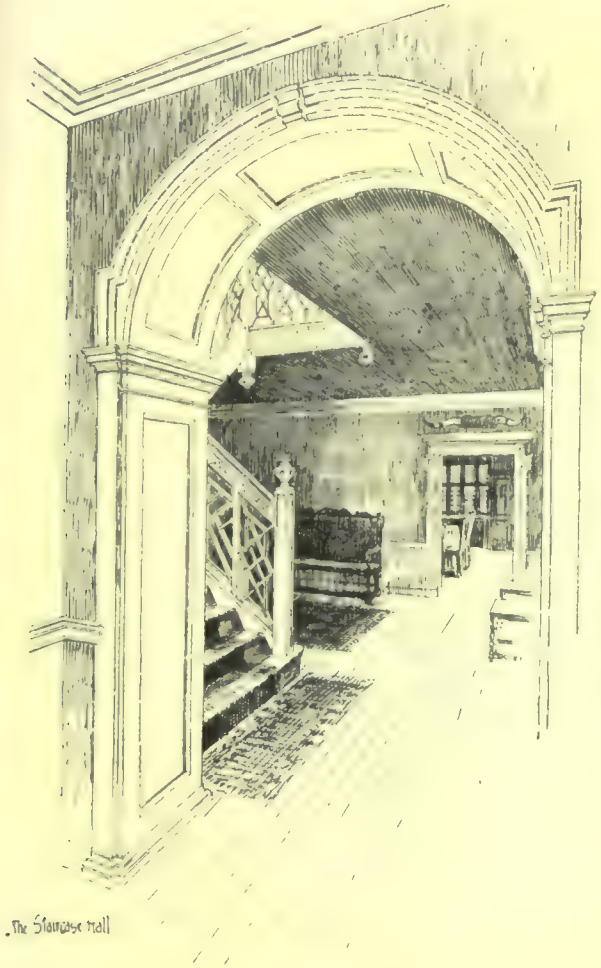


FIG. 231. SOLOM'S COURT

The most original and striking portion of the interior is the billiard-room (see Fig. 228). This is panelled in oak, with a deep frieze above, finished in rough plaster and decorated with a stencilled pattern in gray, which has a pleasing effect. The ceiling and beams are finished in a creamy white with red, black, and gray decoration on the soffits. The effect of this is very good, being bright and telling, without any feeling of rawness or exaggeration. The fireplace is treated simply with a raised hearth enclosed by a beaten iron margin, and with diapered work in the tiles on the back and cheeks. The billiard markers and cues are in a recess in the wall, which is enclosed by a door in the oak panelling. The dining-room is also panelled in oak, and the ceiling, together with those of the porch, staircase, and parlour, are decorated with bands of hand-modelled plaster-work, admirably executed by Mr. George Cox of Leicester.

The tiled recesses for toilet purposes in the bedrooms, the treatment of the bed recesses, the fireplaces and other items of detail, indicate

the careful working out of the design. Indeed, throughout the entire house everything has been kept as simple as possible, having as little unnecessary woodwork requiring periodical painting as could be—the result being a house that, though containing in a small way every modern convenience, does not entail a costly upkeep.

Solom's Court is an excellent example of what may be accomplished by an architect who, with a thorough knowledge and appreciation of the bygone art of old English architecture, combines a keen sense of the value to be obtained from the many practical developments of modern building enterprise. In such a house as this one may find something of that artistic quality which was the charm of old houses in England centuries ago, together with all the little niceties of construction, cleanliness, comfort, and convenience which have become possible only in recent years. You might lay your hands on numberless things in even a moderately-sized house like this which the owner of a costly mansion fifty years ago could hardly have obtained. The continual development which is going on in all kinds of building appliances is a very valuable asset in the hands of a capable architect, who has far better things to work with now than he had in the old days. The paving and wall tiling, good plaster-work, refined and tasteful metal-work, and the wealth of decorative materials of all kinds are some of the items to be counted amongst our modern gains, to say nothing of the first-rate sanitary appliances and the fair assurance

FIG. 232. SOLOM'S COURT

that we have the means to make our houses thoroughly weather-proof. It is by the judicious use of all these things to suit special circumstances that an architect who is really an artist can claim to have produced something better than the world has seen before. The critical may point to the glories and luxuries of Herculaneum and Rome; but those were things which existed under sunny skies, and the cosy comforts of a really first-rate modern English home are realities which belong to our time alone.

FIG. 233. SOLOM'S COURT

WYCHBURY

ON the southern slope of St. Giles's Hill, Winchester, and within a mile of the Cathedral, is to be found a house which is thoroughly illustrative of what may be done to impart variety and interest to a small plan without sacrifice of that comfort and privacy which we esteem so essential in this country. It is called Wychbury, and forms a striking group of building ensconced in trees on the steep slope of St. Giles's Hill—the gardens having been laid out some time previously to the building. The limitations of the site compelled the close planning of the stable group, but all this adds much to the effect as one enters the drive (see Fig. 234).

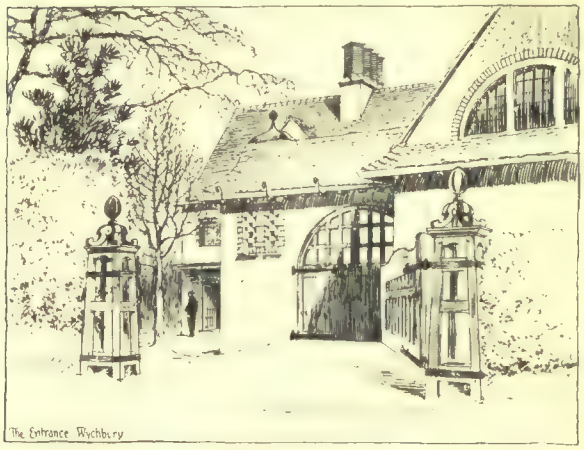


FIG. 234. WYCHBURY: H. DARE BRYAN, ARCHITECT

It will be seen from the plan that the different parts of the house have been laid out with care and thought (see Figs. 235 and 236). When the outer door stands open, the visitor finds a good shelter in the square vestibule, the ceiling of which has a groined vault in white plaster. Double doors open to the hall, which affords quite a comfortable sitting space, and has a good appearance of size by opening through two archways into the staircase corridor. The bay projection to the stairs is an excellent feature, and affords good lighting space upstairs to the bedroom corridor, which has a circular vaulted ceiling (see Fig. 236A). The stairs in a small house have usually a somewhat haphazard look, as though they had been fitted in somehow, and the upper landing or corridor is seldom an architectural item of any value. Mr. Bryan has thought out his staircase design carefully, and the soffit, which is so seldom thought of, has been nicely treated with flat ribs. The flower,

or garden, corridor is another good feature: the walls are faced with red brickwork and the floor is paved with red tiles. Partly over this garden room, and partly over the drawing-room, is the library, which thus has a fireplace in the centre of the room. This produces a very quaint effect, the two portions of the room at either side having circular vaulted ceilings, divided by groined arches at each side of the chimney breast. This unusual bit of planning has an excellent result.

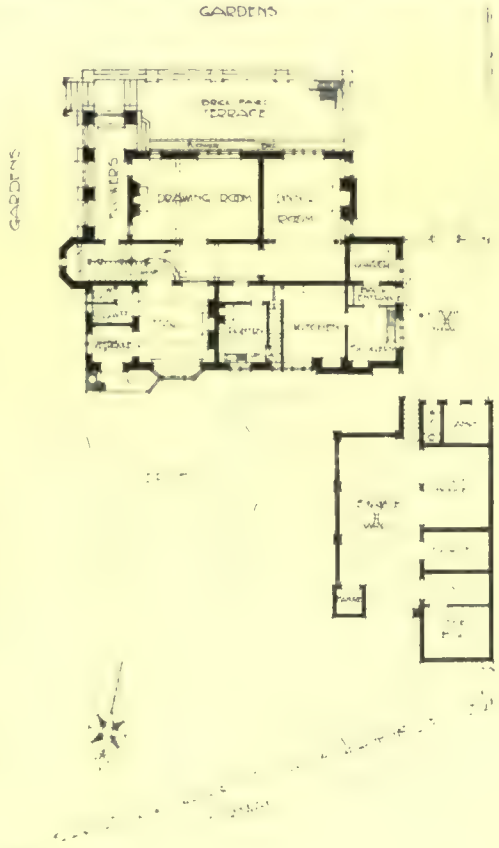


FIG. 235.

The plan of this house as drawn quite fails to convey the singularly pleasant effect of it all, and the stairs across the end of the hall (due to the levels of the site) suggest some difficulty when one looks at the plan which certainly does not appear in the executed work (see Fig. 237). The hall has a broadly treated red brick fireplace, the ceiling is supported by two wood beams, and the white frieze is some four feet deep. Nice old furniture and a beautiful French bracket clock between the arches help to decorate a very pleasing interior. The hall window has a deep window board within the embayed part, and a fixed seat below, and the sides and ceiling are panelled.

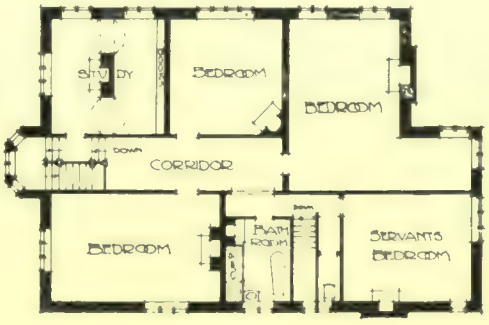


FIG. 236. WYCHBURY

The treatment of the drawing-room fireplace is very broad and simple. The splayed chimney breast is entirely covered with a delightful mottled green vitreous tiling all over the lower part, right up to the

dainty brass gate, and thus there is no woodwork to get bruised or soiled. The tiles are fixed in herring-bone pattern, and the angles of the splays are built up in rounded tiles. The upper part above the tile work is finished in a cream toned woodwork with alternate niches and panels. It is very satisfactory to find a bit of work so simple, durable, and artistically pleasing. The window lighting is well managed in the drawing-room, with a grateful alternation of light and shade, which, I fear, is seldom thought of or aimed for.

FIG. 236A. WYCHBURY

The dining-room is treated with just that amount of architectural dignity which comes so easily with a nicely proportioned Renaissance cornice, and there is a beam with detached columns across the end which holds the side-board. The fireplace is built up of old blue and white Dutch tiles, and has one long white bolection-moulded panel by way of overmantel. At either side of the fireplace are fixed china cupboards with broken pediments over. Within the pediments are glazed lunettes of leaded lights, relieved by a gold stain ornament. It seems to me that there is a genuine satisfaction in building even a small house with two entertaining rooms such as these which will never go out of fashion or pleasurable use.

The exterior of Wychbury is mainly of coarse-textured rough-cast, with red-tiled roofs (which look nice enough to be rejected Broseleys!). The flintwork of the district is introduced in panels in the stable and terrace walls. Mrs. Watts's design of red terra-cotta flower vases adorn the terrace walls. The entrance door is of oak, and over the hood is a nicely modelled lead panel, with the motto, "Laborum meta petita,"

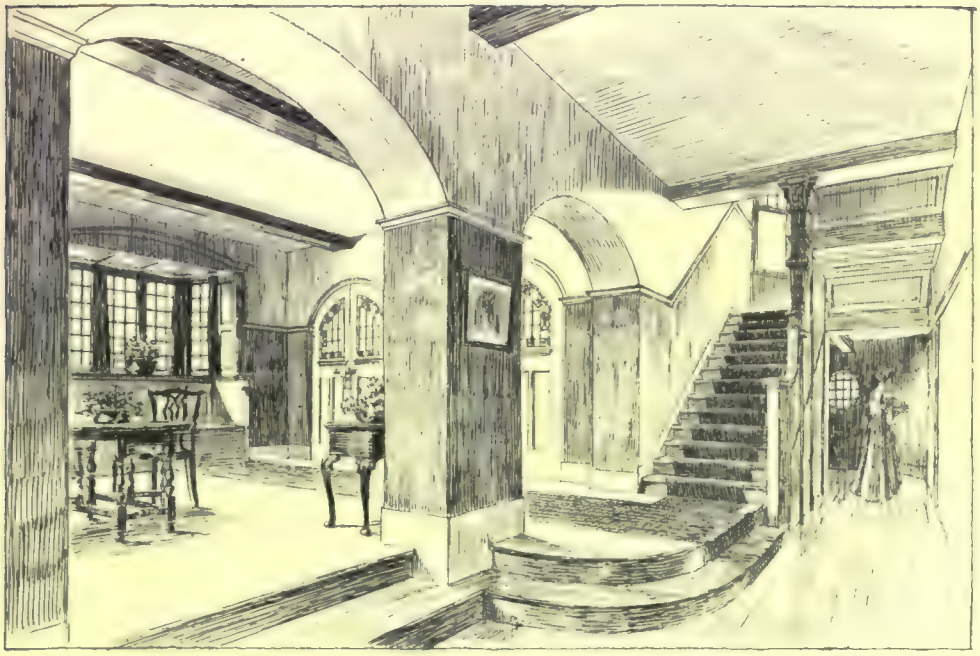


FIG. 237. THE HALL AND STAIRS

FIG. 238. WYCHBURY. TERRACE FRONT

which will convey the idea to the beholder that the completed house is the longed-for goal of effort (see Fig. 239). The woodwork generally, including the door shutters, is painted green.

FIG. 239. WYCHBURY. PANEL OVER DOOR

Owing to the steep fall of the ground the tennis lawn had to be formed opposite the end of the house at about the level of the entrance, only a small lawn being possible below the south terrace. Above the tennis lawn the ground is left very much as a wild garden, planted with bulbs. Some delightful possibilities as to formal gardening await development, but it is always a question how far this shall go so as not to trespass on any natural features which may be in themselves far better than any formal design we can make.

WEBBINGTON, SOMERSET

THERE is always a fascination about a hill-side site for a house if it only be on the right side of the right kind of hill, for then its position secures it a fine command of view, whilst the hill affords it shelter on one front. It may often be the best site of all, if it is well selected, just as a site in a narrow valley is so often the worst.

Webbington is obviously well placed, for, whilst it is not too high to be readily accessible without undue toil, it has enough eminence to afford delightful prospects. It is situate on the lower slope of a spur of the most western peak of the Mendips, and the big hill which is called Crook's Peak rises behind the house to a height of 750 feet above sea level. This finely shaped hill has a beautiful surface and texture with outcropping rock and gorse, and forms a glorious background to the picturesque white gabled house (see Fig. 240).

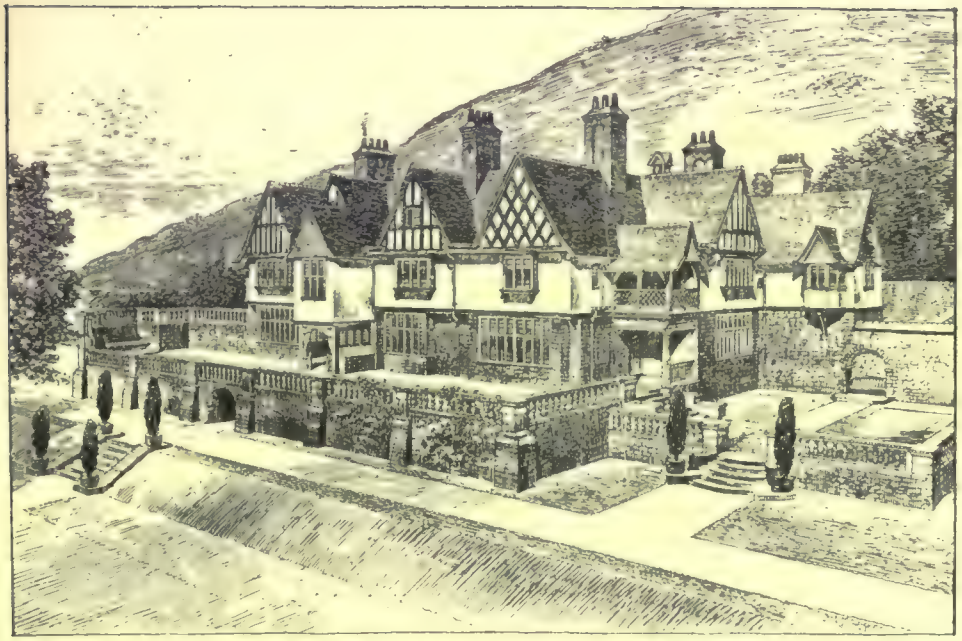


FIG. 240. TERRACE FRONT

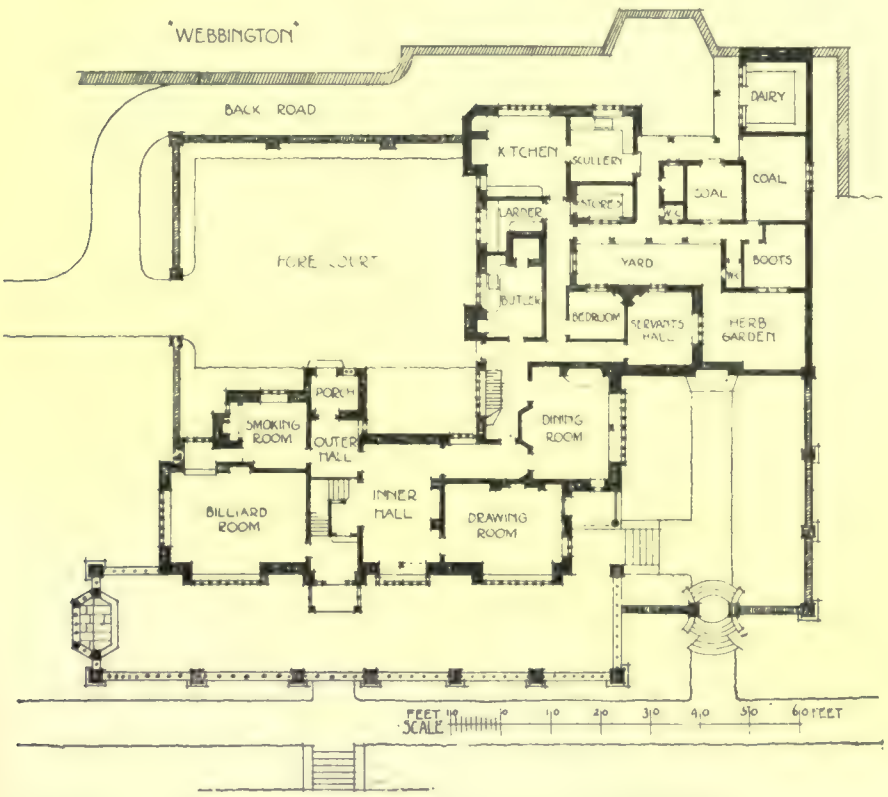


FIG. 241. WEBBINGTON (GROUND PLAN): E. J. MAY, ARCHITECT

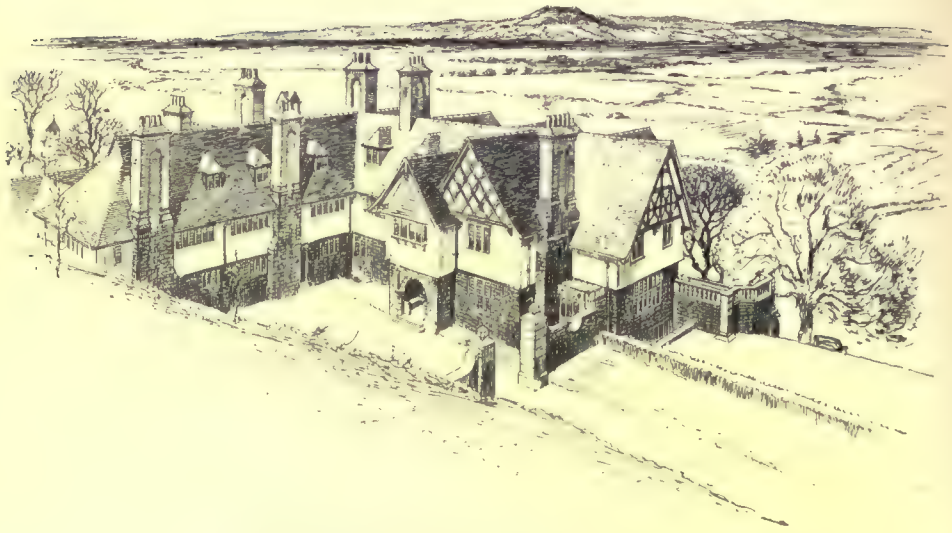


FIG. 242. WEBBINGTON. FROM THE SLOPE OF CROOK'S PEAK

Enough level ground has been obtained to provide a large court-yard on the entrance front, and a fine walled terrace on the other front, which buttresses up the house very agreeably in the appearance from the valley.

FIG. 242A. WEBBINGTON. STAIR ENTRANCE FROM HALL

Approaching the house, after a short drive from the pretty village of Winscombe, we come suddenly upon it, nestling on the hill-side to our left, and as we look out over the long stretch of level meadows with Brent Knoll in the distance, and beyond, again, the Bridgewater Bay, the Bristol Channel, and the Welsh Hills, we realize the charm of the site, which combines the sheltering effect of the hill with the beauty of a widely-stretching valley landscape (see Fig. 242).

We may well, after much experience, come to the conclusion that good sites are born, not made! Certain it is that many good houses have been built on bad sites, and many are very badly placed on good ones! My readers will agree with me that for a hill-side house with no great amount of level ground to be obtained except at enormous cost, the proper treatment is of a sturdy and solid character, at all events in the lower parts, and also a plan which stretches length-

FIG. 243. WEBBINGTON. FIRST FLOOR PLAN

ways with the hillside rather than the shape of a square, which involves much deep cutting. To make the house sit with apparent security and solidity on its base is of the first importance, and to this end some outstanding work of a substantial kind, such as this admirable terrace walling at Webbington, is of the greatest value. At Webbington the lower level of the building is made very useful for a gentlemen's cloakroom, a lower garden entrance, heating chamber, and so forth.

At a glance, the architect will note how skilfully the plan is laid

out for good internal economy (see Figs. 241 and 243). The main entrance is well sheltered from the inner hall, which makes quite a comfortable lounge, the entrance from it to the main staircase being through an opening in the oak panelling (see Fig. 242A). The dining-room is so placed that from it there is the easiest convenience of access for both service and visitor, whilst the smell of cooking is kept away from the other entertaining rooms. It will also be seen that in this house there is no attempt to make the entertaining rooms *en suite*; each one is treated with a privacy and separation which certainly make for comfort. In fact, the whole plan suggests the feeling of cosiness and comfort, even in the main staircase and the long landing. In this respect it is essentially English and marks the striking difference between our own and French, and many American, houses. As we have seen, the dining-room is approached down a corridor from one corner of the hall. The study is entered from the entrance vestibule, with access also from one corner of the billiard-room. The drawing-room is entered from one corner of the hall; and the billiard-room is at a slightly lower level than the hall, and is entered from the garden vestibule. Thus each of the principal rooms has a well separated access.

FIG. 244. WEBBINGTON. ENTRANCE PORCH

The porch (see Fig. 244) is planned with a low wide arch, which has an inviting and hospitable look. It has a quaint fixed wood and stone seat, and the roof is vaulted in brick and stone. The vestibule is panelled in oak, and has a dainty plaster ceiling slightly domical.

FIG. 245. THE HALL

FIG. 246. WEBBINGTON. THE DINING-ROOM

FIG. 247. WEBBINGTON. THE DRAWING-ROOM

The hall (Fig. 245) is finished entirely in oak, with a note of warm colour in the red brick vaulting over the mantel-piece.

The dining-room has several points of interest. Above the high oak panelling is a quaintly modelled frieze in plaster. The cove over the mantel-piece which forms the trimmer arch of the fireplace above is also finished in plaster, with lightly modelled intersecting lines. The oak beams are deeply moulded on the edges, and give a solidity of effect which is pleasing. My sketch (Fig. 246) illustrates the interesting fireside design in this room and the furniture is omitted but the views from every point are extremely good. The figure, which is of an average size person, indicates the scale.

FIG. 248. A BEDROOM WITH OPEN TIMBER ROOF

FIG. 249. WEBBINGTON. THE STAIRCASE

The drawing-room (see Fig. 247) is in tones of white and ivory, with pale blue curtains of a pretty tone. The plaster ornament is very softly and nicely modelled, so that it decorates without any harshness or overmuch emphasis. This room commands fine views, as, indeed, do all the principal rooms on both floors.

The large bedroom, with timber and plaster and outstanding truss (see Fig. 248) is a very interesting room. It has a charming little belvedere balcony commanding lovely views (see Fig. 250).

The main staircase has a square landing near the top steps, which is fitted with side seats. It commands a delightful view. The ceiling is a semicircular plaster vault decorated with flatly-modelled bands of enrichment over each beam. The enriched bands run also along the springing of the vault above the wood cornice. The posts and rails which enclose the well of the stairs, have some very characteristic wood cutting like the traditional work found on our old carts and wagons, and my sketch (Fig. 249) shows how effective it is. The whole result in the staircase design is most pleasing.

FIG. 250. WEBBINGTON

The billiard-room is a pleasant, spacious apartment, with a raised recess at one corner. The fireplace and mantel are of interesting design.

As to materials, Webbington is built with stone walls for the lower storey of good texture and colour, with white plaster finish to the upper storey, the roofs being covered with red tiles. The exterior woodwork of doors, windows, timber framing, and barges to gables, is all oak. The terrace walling is built of the neighbouring Doulting stone at the terrace level, and below that of the dark local stone.

The approach drive to the house branches out from the main road at a point which enables it to be carried through at pretty nearly the level of the house on the hill-side. At the entrance is a most successfully designed little lodge built up in half-timber work. As will be seen from my sketch (Fig. 251), the grouping and outline of the building with the entrance gates are exceedingly good; the emphasis of the various features being very happy. It takes a good deal of exceptional

instinct and knowledge to design so charming a lodge as this, if we may judge from the fact that we see few as good. As one drives

FIG. 251. WEBBINGTON. ENTRANCE LODGE AND GATES

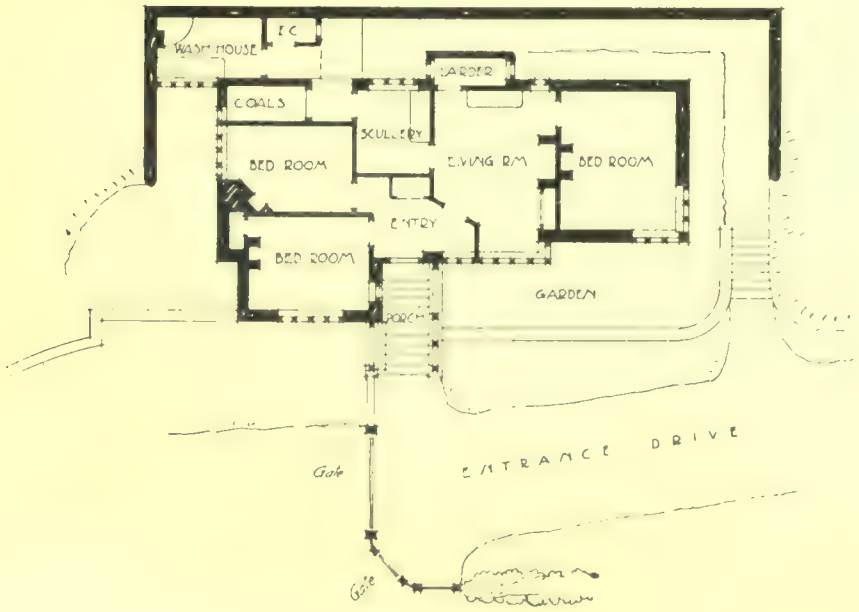


FIG. 252. WEBBINGTON

away from the house the view of it is quite as satisfactory. The plan (see Fig. 252) indicates how well the accommodation required has been obtained.

Another picturesque feature on the estate is the group of kennels and hunting stables, which Mr. E. J. May, the architect, has also designed and superintended. It is a very plain group of buildings, but it is quite a pleasing feature in the landscape from several points.

A house like Webbington would probably make the reputation of an unknown architect; it is certainly to be counted amongst Mr. May's most successful buildings, and to those who have studied the "points" of successful home building, bespeaks a sound knowledge and experience in domestic architecture, allied to an intuitive instinct for artistic development. We may trace two little items of detail to

FIG. 253. WEBBINGTON. FROM THE HILLSIDE

Switzerland and Germany, but the building throughout marks a sane and encouraging belief in the merit of our traditional English work, and one cannot think that the vitality of English traditions has died out whilst we get new buildings like this.

I could name two or three items of detail in such a house as this which might be anathema to an architectural professor, but to arrive at a result in house design like Webbington one has to know much and feel much which is not taught in the schools. Its expression is that which comes from a sound faith in by-gone tradition, and is not marked by a straining effort to get outside the inheritance of our architectural beliefs.

HEMINGFORD

THOUGH the limitations of a long narrow site to views obtained of the roadway and garden may present certain difficulties to the architect in the development of a good design, they are assuredly not insurmountable, and some of the best planning has been contrived to meet the problem. When the site is extremely narrow and still has to serve the purposes of a good house, it is obvious that if anything of com-

FIG. 254. HEMINGFORD: E. M. WIMPERIS, ARCHITECT

bined art and convenience is to result, careful thought and skill are needed. The chief evil to be avoided is, perhaps, the attempt to accomplish too much in the space at disposal. One thing, however, must strike even the casual observer, and that is the desirability of having little or nothing in the way of projecting construction from the main line of building either to the front or the back. In this respect of clear outlook at front and back, Hemingford is admirable, for the two frontages have the clearest and pleasantest lines one could desire. It is in respect of its adaptation to a limited site, in the creation of a pleasant environment with a somewhat rare architectural quality in its road front and

approach, that Hemingford has been selected for illustration. That which precisely marks the distinctive note in a house-design is, perhaps, not usually apparent to the passer-by, but we can hardly suppose the most casual observer would fail to note in the whole treatment of this entrance front and its enclosed courts something unusually attractive.

As you catch a glimpse of the house with its long simple lines of ridge and eaves over the enclosing hedges of the forecourt, it appears to nestle down within its screened environment from the outer world in a very homelike and cosy fashion (see Fig. 254). The elements of its success are few. The quiet simplicity of the main lines —the emphasis of parts, the long lines of window above and plain wall below, within which the entrance door, with its quaint outline, finds an effective setting — the interest of the staircase projection and plaster gable at one end and the bit of half-timber work at the other—the pleasant enclosure of the forecourt with green banks and trimmed hedges, within which are framed the graceful entrance gates—these are points which count in the result (see Fig. 255). The design is a happy mean between the affectation of "simplicity" we so often find on one hand, and the obtrusive determination to be "interesting" which spoils much otherwise excellent work on the other. The appreciation of a good house design must be determined, of course, by the mental standpoint from which it is regarded, and the architect who is thoroughly imbued with the feelings which have created the true charm of work, whether old or new, cannot fail to realize something of this in his work. Such an architect is fortunate if he receives the appreciation of those who are able to regard

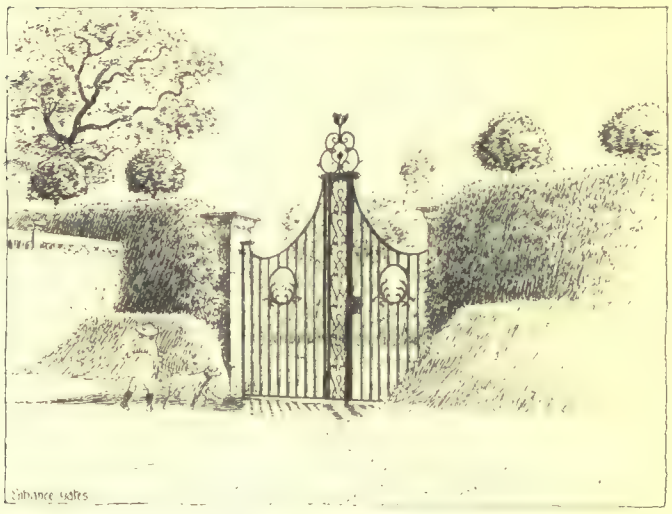


FIG. 255. HEMINGFORD

his design from his own standpoint. It may be noted here that Mr. E. M. Wimperis is not one of the many to whom old work is a fetish, and he would no more care to reproduce a house which might be mistaken for Ightham Mote than he would to make a Wesleyan chapel look like the Acropolis at Athens. He believes in the necessity of modernity—that is, in the living of our life in our own way, and in making our art the expression of our own feelings. This, of course, is to be done on a basis of respect for, and appreciation of, all the great past of Art, the charming old Elizabethan houses and the refined classic temples. I have been inclined to call attention to this matter of modernity in art because

FIG. 256. HEMINGFORD

there are signs of two great extremes in the thoughts of artists. There are those who believe our timbers ought to be wrought in the curious and awkward fashion which was adopted in the Middle Ages and that only such tools as were then available ought to be used, whilst the curious shapes and devices, applicable to a semi-barbarous time, should still be adopted. Then there are those who frankly cut adrift from all this, and seem to desire, as in the outrageous examples of *l'art nouveau* to say good-bye to old traditions and at all costs, even of beauty or appropriateness, to get away from everything that has been done before. It is impossible for a genuine artist who has learned the A B C of art architectural, to get away from the regard engendered by the magnifi-

cent architectural records of past times. But the really progressive, the really *live* artist, is the one who can use all this reverence for, and knowledge of, past precedent in a way sympathetic to modern needs. I do not seek to claim too much for the simple little home here illustrated, but I do think it affords some indication of that desirable linking up of the respect for traditional charms with the paramount claim on the artist to leave some impression of himself and his own time on his work.

FIG. 257. HEMINGFORD

Mr. Wimperis is an artist, and, as the son of a distinguished water-colour artist (the late Mr. E. W. Wimperis), has been trained all his life to look at things from the artistic, as well as the practical, side. Hemingford, which he built for himself, speaks clearly, at every point, of the desire to give some artistic expression to the uses of a home. To begin with, we have noted the pleasant feeling of comfortable environment obtained by the forecourt surrounded by sloping grass banks, bordered on top by cut hedges with shaped clumps outstanding. The nicely-designed gate piers are now grown over, but I have indicated how individual in detail they are. The general effect of piers and gates is that of a Georgian type, yet it is seen that in detail everything is quite original, and, we may claim, equally decorative with its prototype. The upper scrolls and centre ornamental scrollwork, which in a Georgian gate are often ornament and nothing else, are here made to indicate something of

FIG. 258. HEMINGFORD

the individual, for the top scrolls are two interlacing E's, the initials of both husband and wife, and the centre ornament is a series of W's, which is a happy bit of blacksmith's work (see Fig. 255). None of my illustrations quite conveys the success of the effect of this dainty pair of iron gates in their deep setting of green hedges and banks. We tried some snapshot photographs, but they were too good; the details were too clear: if they had been worse they would have been better!

A corner of drawing-room

FIG. 259. HEMINGFORD

The next note of interest to be seen is the entrance doorway, which is crowned above the keystone with the one bit of carving the house can boast. This is a sort of family tree growing out of the letter W, and it gives agreeable emphasis to the doorway. The projecting staircase (it is always pleasant to give external expression to the staircase when it can be nicely managed), prettily grown over with creepers, is a feature of the entrance front. Passing through a doorway below this window we find a second little forecourt devoted to grass and flowers,

which makes a pleasant outlook from the morning-room window. The back of the house has a broad walled terrace with gravel walk and steps down at either end (see Fig. 256). The tennis lawn is bordered by long herbaceous beds, and through the hedge beyond is a grass-grown orchard.

Entering at the front door, we find a square vestibule with lavatory off to the right. From this vestibule we come to a corridor which is nicely treated with cross-beams and arches in the frieze over each door-opening. Some good coloured lead-light glazing shows in the screen to the staircase hall, and Powell's glazing in tones of white and green, in the vestibule screen is charming. The corridor widens out to a small staircase hall (see Fig. 257), and the stairway is made quite interesting by its treatment above. In the open panel above the main landing is fixed a quaint Spanish cross, which comes in very happily (see Fig. 260).

FIG. 260. HEMINGFORD

The dining-room rejoices in a semicircular fifteenth-century Italian lunette over the fireplace, which came, I believe, from some old Italian church. It is broadly and finely painted, and represents Jonah being cast out of the whale's mouth (the whale being a dolphin!). It is a fine piece of painting and gives quite a character to the room. The proportions and lighting of this room are very pleasant, and I regret being unable to explain it by illustration.

The drawing-room is L-shaped and is charmingly treated with a green canvas-like wall-filling, and a Japanese gold lacquered scroll

design in the frieze. The design of the fireplace, with its splayed side recesses with fixed seats, I illustrate by a sketch (see Fig. 259). The

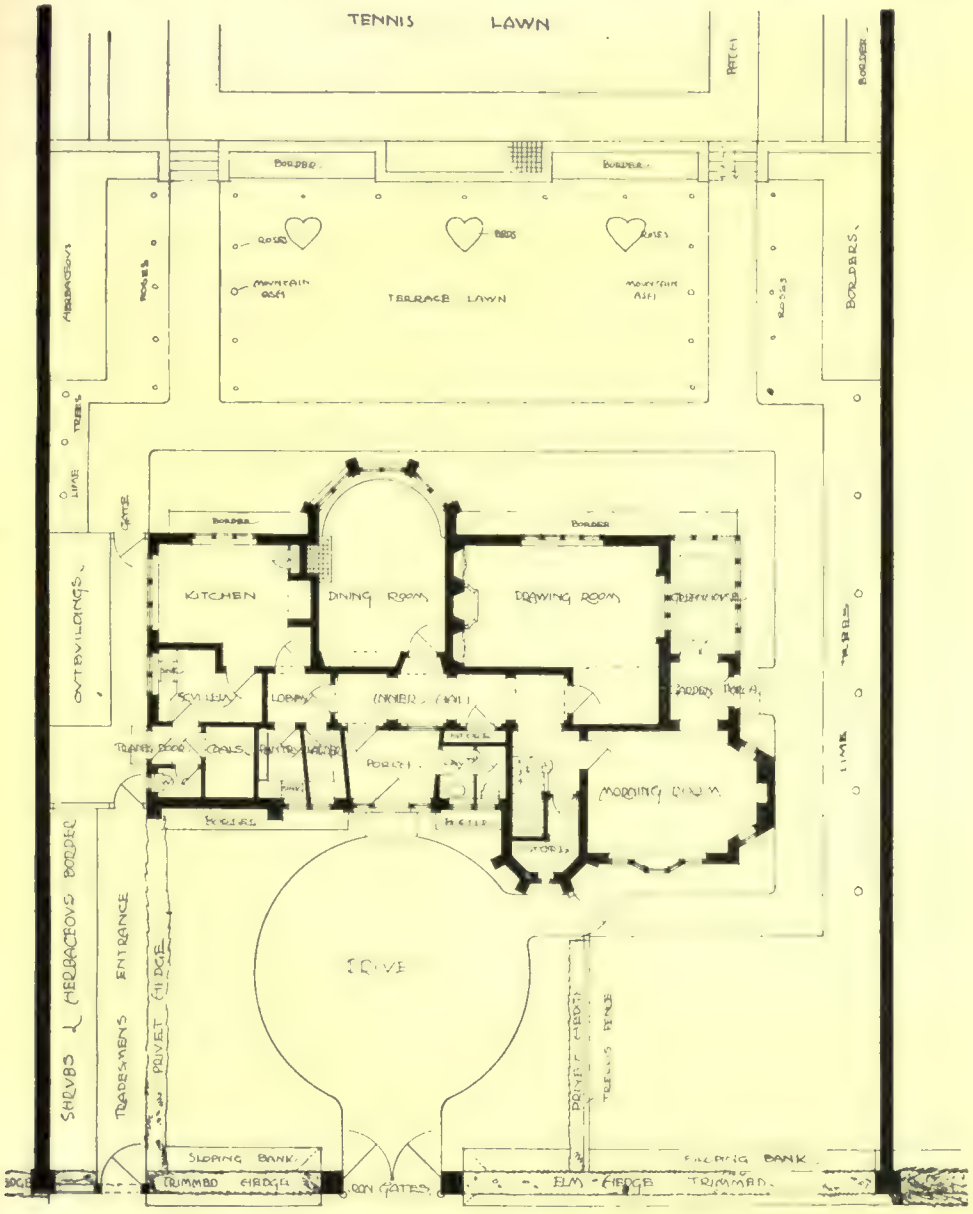


FIG. 261. HEMINGFORD

delightful old carved mirror frames and the old reliquary case make sparkling points of decoration in the overmantel space. The effect of the green wall covering appearing as a background between the many

pictures is very pleasing, perhaps all the more so for this partial showing. A quaint lead-light window comes between the room and the conservatory, and this I have indicated (see Fig. 258). The morning-room is cosy, with nice effects of cross lighting.

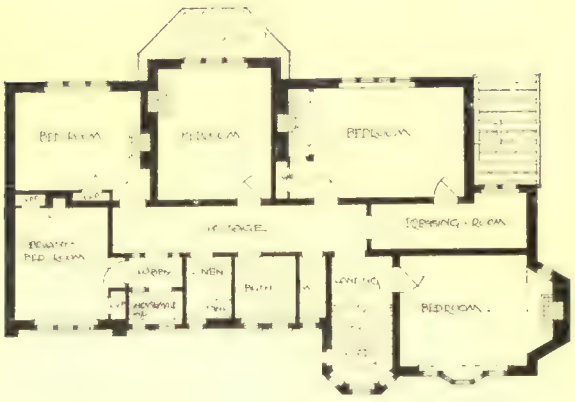


FIG. 262. HEMINGFORD. BEDROOM PLAN

The name of the house is taken from Hemingford on the Ouse betwcen Huntingdon and St. Ives. If it were standing on an isolated site in that nice country from whence it takes its name, and had no limitations of environment or outlook, I think it would look as well as it does even now within the restricted borders of the more costly building land that lies within sight of the playing fields of Eton.

WHISTLERS HOLLOW

A WOODED hollow on a hill-side, sloping to the south and west, and bounded on two sides by a delightful golf course, suggested the site for a golfer's cottage, and Whistlers Hollow is the result. It is safe to say that people oftener choose a house than a site—that consideration of the house itself as to design and accommodation comes before the question of a healthy or desirable site. The sequel is often found to be that, though the house is suitable in all respects, the site is not. Numerous cases occur to one in which much effort and care have been expended on a home which after all proves to be entirely unsuited for its occupants owing to climatic conditions. The generally mistaken fear of a hill on account of its bleakness, and the eager acceptance of a valley for its shelter, are amongst the most prevalent mistakes. Nothing can compensate for the lack of fresh air and sunlight, and there are

comparatively few who are not likely to benefit by living on a breezy, open common or a hill-top.

The situation of Woldingham on the North Downs provides plenty of admirable sites, such as this of Whistlers Hollow, at an elevation of some 800 feet above sea-level, and, looking to the certainty of its great attractiveness as a residential district within easy reach of London, an excellent nine hole golf course has been developed. The North Downs Golf Club has here a course which is the highest in the south of England. It commands magnificent prospects to the south, west, and north, and a visit to this delightful course is nearly as refreshing to the

FIG. 263. WHISTLERS HOLLOW (THE TERRACE): W. RUPERT DAVISON, ARCHITECT

townsman as a trip to Scotland. Owing to a variety of causes the air of Woldingham is more invigorating than that of most places in the south of England, and the wonder is that the lovely sites to be obtained on the North Downs have not all been built on long ago.

The prospect from the southern boundary of the North Downs Golf ground is not to be surpassed in the south of England. An apparently limitless panorama of fields and woods stretches before one right away to the sea coast, whilst turning to the northward we have one succession after another of hill ridges, fading into the blue distance somewhere about the Chiltern Hills.

The special attraction of site for the house here illustrated was a

little wooded hollow some two hundred yards to the west of the Whistlers Wood, hence the name Whistlers Hollow (see Fig. 264). This hollow was a most romantic little dingle, completely surrounded by bushes and trees—just the sort of place which one imagines would be used as a trysting spot for romantic adventures. The western enclosure was removed and the hollow levelled out into a lawn. At a level of several steps below a plateau was formed for the house, and in front of it is a broad terrace some two hundred feet in length (see Fig. 263).

FIG. 264. WHISTLERS HOLLOW

From the end of this a drive about four hundred feet in length descends to the Southfields road. A second terrace stretches across the site at the level of the circular bastion, making the bend in the drive. A long green walk forms the footway approach from the road up to the southern boundary, between herbaceous borders backed with evergreens: on the northern boundary a shaded path leads up through the fine old hedge-row (see Fig. 265). A hedge-row such as this one, which has been accumulating black soil and flints for many years, is a valuable asset to a country site. It is not only a store-house of valuable material, but forms a delightful setting for all kinds of wild-flower gardening, and its shelter provides a good planting for raspberry canes and the like.

The first attempt in the neighbourhood to finish a chimney-top like a house roof with a complete covering and enclosure of tiles has been successfully accomplished at Whistlers Hollow. The photograph indicates how admirably the builders have carried out the idea (see Fig. 266). There is no protection for an exposed site like well executed tile work, and probably the ideal way is to cover the walls entirely with vertical tiling. Elm boarding is another capital finish for the filling in

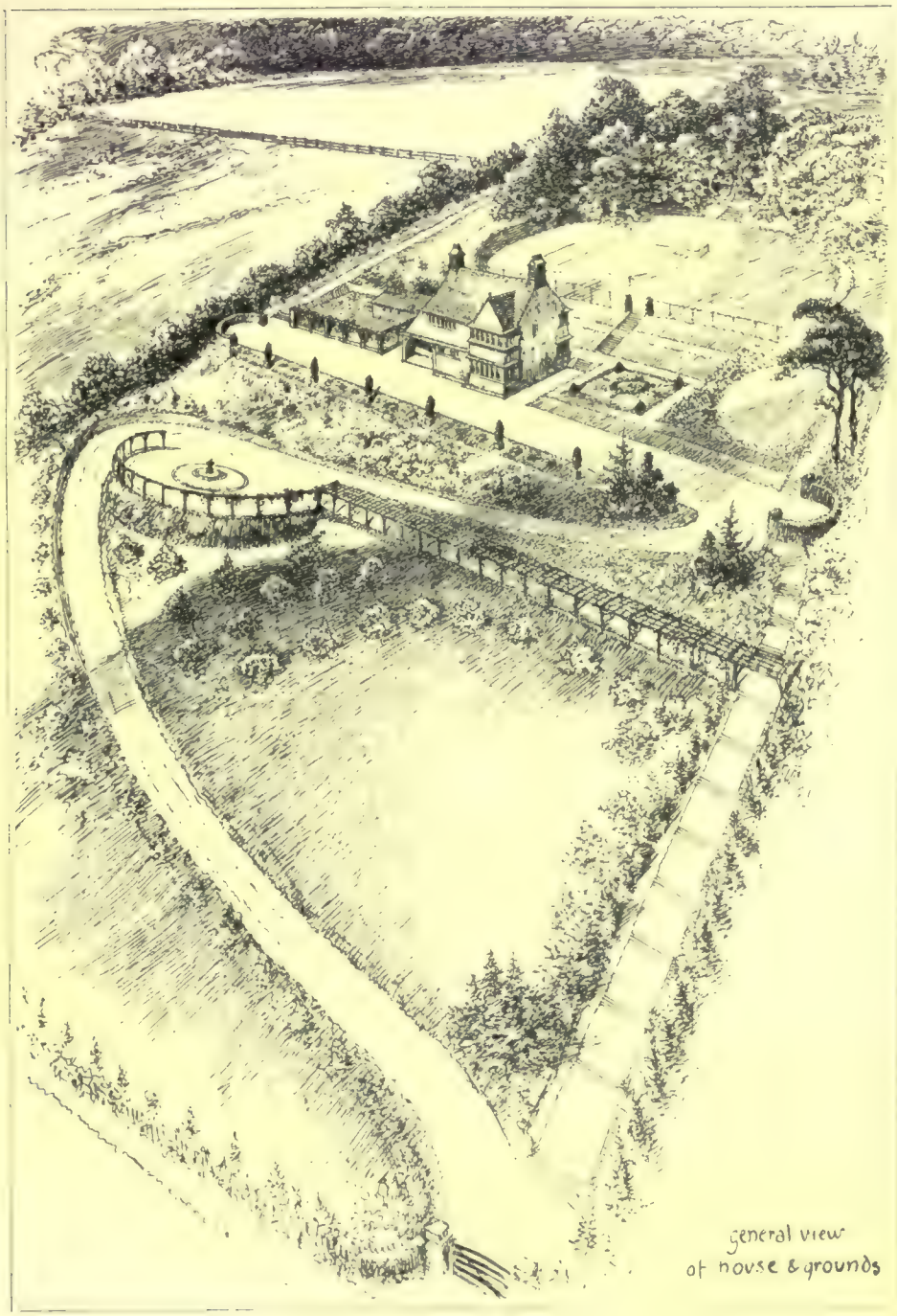


FIG. 265. WHISTLERS HOLLOW

of gables, as carried out by Mr. Lutyens for the Countess of Lytton in her charming little cottage at Knebworth, and for homely country buildings it is very pleasing, in time acquiring a delightful silvery tone. Perhaps one reason why rough-cast for exterior walling is so popular is its pleasing texture and the light and cheerful effect it produces amongst green surroundings. If it is well executed over a thoroughly good rendering of cement it is one of the best of exterior finishings. Brick and stone, even when obtained of good colour and texture, never afford so com-

FIG. 266. WHISTLERS HOLLOW

plete a protection without the precaution of hollow walls. This question of materials is one which is always a source of careful thought to the architect, not only as influencing the character of design, but as affording the basis for a good colour scheme. Those who study the matter will observe how largely the choice of material influences the finished effect. I remember a very signal comparison of results which was afforded by two detached houses which I was called in to inspect some time since on two adjoining sites, in which the same design was carried out in two different ways. One house had white rough-cast walls and

a tiled roof, and the other was faced throughout with red bricks under the tiled roof. The feeling of "scale" was immensely superior in the brick-walled house, and the whole result much more pleasing. I have never asked the able architect who designed them what was his own opinion, but I believe he would agree with my view. Any building certainly looks more simple and dignified if carried out in tones of one colour, rather than if it is divided by sharp contrasts of colour between the walls and roof, with perhaps odd bits of half-timber work thrown

FIG. 267. WHISTLERS HOLLOW

in here and there. A most pleasing effect is of white or cream rough-cast walling with gray stone slates, the effect being heightened by a little admixture of half-timber work. But the speculative builder is prone to jumble up rough-cast, half-timber, red and blue brickwork, red tiles and green painted woodwork, and so destroy all quality of repose.

As will be gathered from the sketches, the aim in this cottage has been to eschew anything in the way of ornament, but to obtain the simplest and quietest effect possible. The dining-room has something

of the flavour of an old farmhouse parlour (see Figs. 267 and 268). There is little to get out of order, and this restfulness of design is more pleasing to many folk than the worry of ornamentation. A large effect has been attempted in the angle fireplace by carrying the mantel up to the ceiling in a very simple manner. The whole of the ground floor is laid in pitch-pine wood blocks and concrete, and one is inclined to think that the old-fashioned method of sleeper walls for the flooring is very largely disappearing in view of the much more satisfactory solid floor.

FIG. 268. WHISTLERS HOLLOW

The completed design of this house is for another parlour across the south front, when the present smaller one will form a little hall-parlour as an ante-space to the larger one (see Fig. 272). A further development would be the changing the pantry into a downstairs lavatory, the scullery into a serving pantry, and the addition of further outside scullery and larder. The present arrangement was intended to serve as a golfer's cottage on a modest scale (see plans, Fig. 269).

In Woldingham the abundance and variety of charming sites are so many that each one seems to have some special advantage and character. There are wooded slopes, breezy uplands, and meadows enclosed with woodland which offer as great a variety as one could desire. If house building is to maintain its interest it must be in the adaptability of houses to their sites, and sometimes good fortune, but oftener experience is a guide to the desired result. Frequently the

beauty of a site is never realized until it is occupied by a house and garden, and unfortunately the mistake in location of the rooms is often discovered when it is too late to alter it.

No one can pretend to plan with complete success unless a thorough realization of the site is first obtained. I know a house in which nothing but a north and east aspect was possible or desirable for its drawing-room, and the result is a very successful and cheerful apartment.

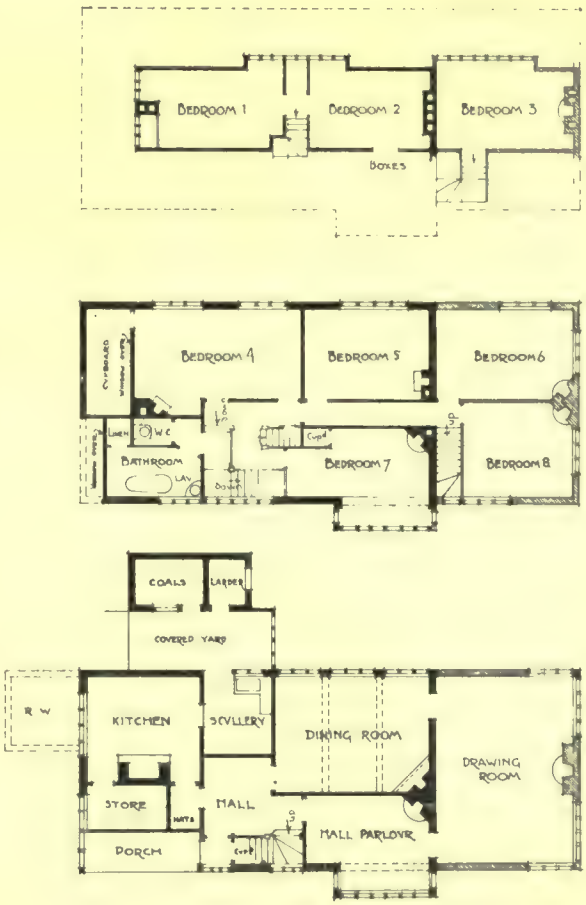


FIG. 269. WHISTLERS HOLLOW

The most desirable essays in house design, especially for country sites, are those which speak of homeliness, restfulness, and breadth of treatment. It is only natural in these days of bustling activity and marvellous industrial developments that the sound traditions of the best old houses are apt to be lost sight of. In the endeavour to claim attention for their work and secure a passing interest, architects are tempted to put too much into their designs and to pile up features (attractive enough in themselves) which largely destroy the reposeful quality which is so captivating and pleasing in the best old examples. I am often struck with the absence of a good skyline to houses which in themselves present many points of interest in detail. Yet the outline of the whole mass is a matter of paramount importance, and no quality of detail can compensate for the lack of a nice emphasis of roof outline or well placed chimneys and gables. No scheming of

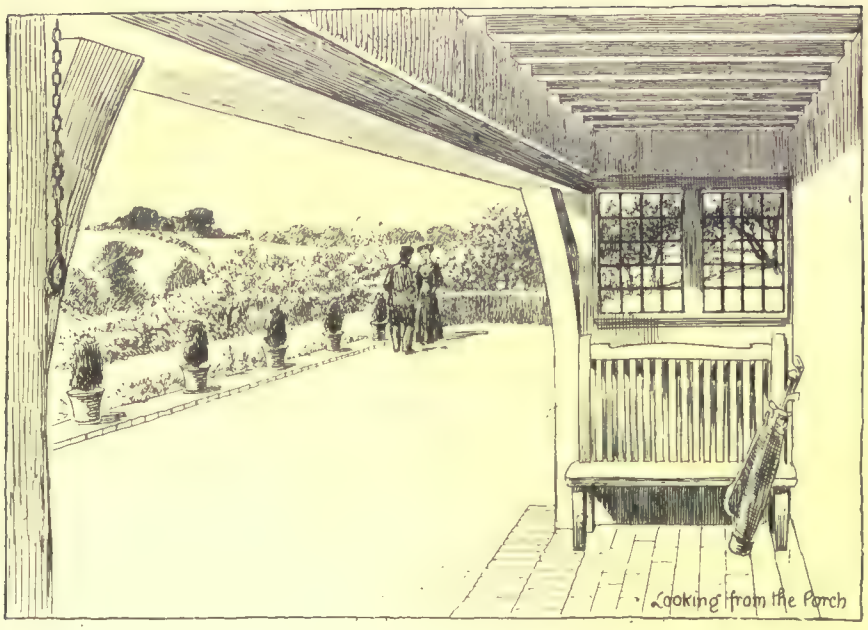


FIG. 270.

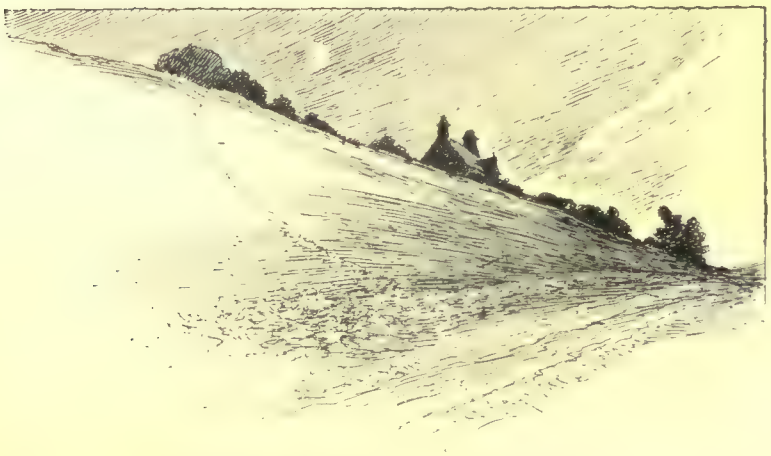


FIG. 271. WHISTLERS HOLLOW. HILL OUTLINE AT NIGHT

convenient doors and windows and chimneys must be done at a sacrifice of good proportion of mass or of the pleasant apportionment of solids and voids. And it is surely of the first importance that a building should appear to sit securely and restfully on the site, that it have a look of solidity and comfort, and promise to remain an object of agreeable distinction on the site long after any little freaks of detail have lost their novelty and interest.

FIG. 272. WHISTLERS HOLLOW

MARSH COURT, HAMPSHIRE

PERHAPS the most complete expression of the character which has been associated with the work of Mr. E. L. Lutyens in recent years is to be found in Marsh Court. It is certainly amongst the most striking examples of that quality of design by which Mr. Lutyens has been able to evolve a quite new and fresh interest in domestic architecture. We were undoubtedly showing signs of sleepiness in domestic art, and it was time somebody arrived to prove that there was plenty of fresh interest to be obtained in the evolution of characteristically English work. Here is an architect who obviously enjoys his designing, and is not content to shelter himself completely behind the bulwarks of tradition and precedent, but seeks to build up some fresh

FIG. 273. ENTRANCE FRONT AND COURTYARD

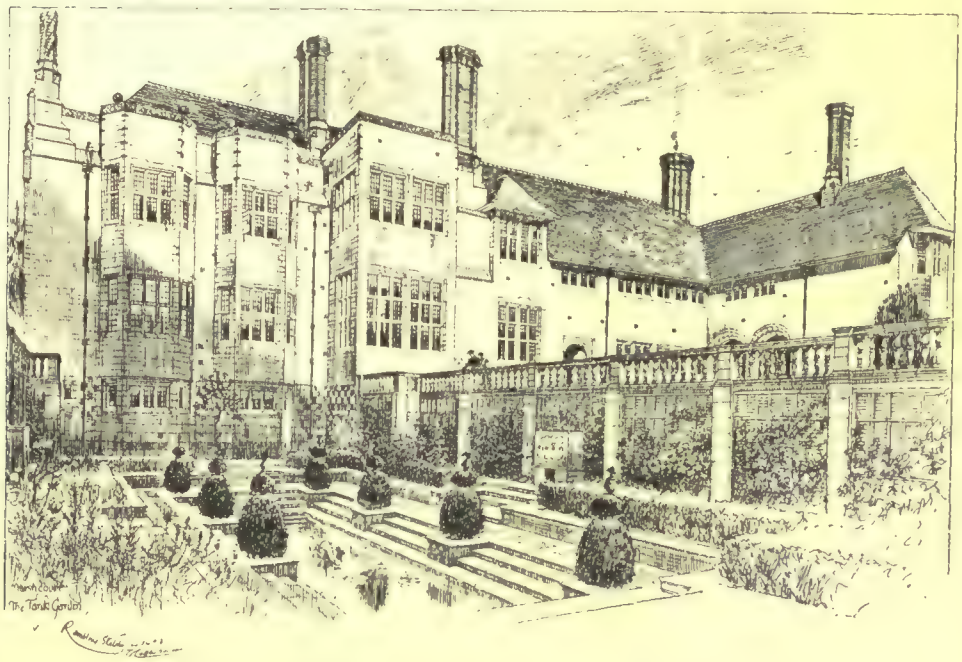


FIG. 274. MARSH COURT (FROM THE TANK GARDEN): E. L. LUTYENS, ARCHITECT

interest of his own on a knowledge of past art. We find in his work the letters and signs familiar to us in our alphabet of art, but the combinations have a piquancy and interest which come from some original thought, and are such as no dull copying of past art can produce.

I have seen a great many good modern houses, but the entrance front of Marsh Court came upon me with a delightful freshness of interest. Other houses have been built on similar lines, with long, low proportions, white walls, tall red chimneys, and a symmetrical front with balanced flanking wings and central porch, but the combination of features, of lines of material and colour, somehow produce a new result.

FIG. 275. MARSH COURT. VIEW THROUGH PORCH

As you drive out of the oak wood up to the entrance front the whole effect makes a charming picture (see Fig. 273). We have a great quadrangle, formed by the projecting wings of the house, with steep hipped roofs, and enclosing yew hedges and walls. The drive enters the court over a low stone bridge. Beyond the group of white buildings with red-tiled roofs is seen the lovely valley of the Test, and the house and its setting combine to the making of a most pleasing picture, in which the quiet and restful quality of the design is conspicuous. Quite a different view is obtained from below the terraces of the garden front, where the long line of the great tile roof dominates a picturesque line of red chimney-stacks, pergola, and terrace walls, the whole crowning the hill slope with a background of trees in a delightful way (see Figs. 274 and 279).

The entrance porch is recessed within the main front, and encloses the few steps needful to reach the main floor level. The view outwards from this porch across the courtyard to the entrance bridge is very quaint (see Fig. 275). It will be noted that the vaulting is finished

in alternate squares of red brick and white chalk with white bands running across from each of the arch voissoirs. Entering the porch doorway we come into a long corridor (see Fig. 276) leading direct on the right to the principal staircase, and giving access a little to the left to the ante-space between the hall and dining-room. From this ante-space a door leads out to the garden court.

It will be seen from the plan (see Figs. 281 and 282) that from the dining-room we have a vista through the hall to the drawing-room, a length of about one hundred feet. The hall has a panelling of oak, with oak pilasters and cornice, enclosing a space of decorated white chalk frieze: the ceiling is of white plaster divided by moulded ribs, and with modelled foliage in high relief. This is a fine apartment (see Fig. 277). The dining-room is panelled round in richly-figured American walnut, and has a low plaster dome over the centre, from which hangs an electric pendant (see Fig. 280).

FIG. 276. MARSH COURT. ENTRANCE CORRIDOR

A striking and delightful feature of the interior is the fine oak staircase, which goes down to the lower level, at which the slope of the ground permits a gun- and fishing-room with conveniences.

It will be seen that the billiard-room opens out by arches from the great staircase, and the effect looking through, both towards the room and from it, is very good. The lower part of the billiard table is formed of polished Hopton wood stone, and the electric pendant is built up in a light framework of oak (see Fig. 278).

FIG. 277. THE HALL

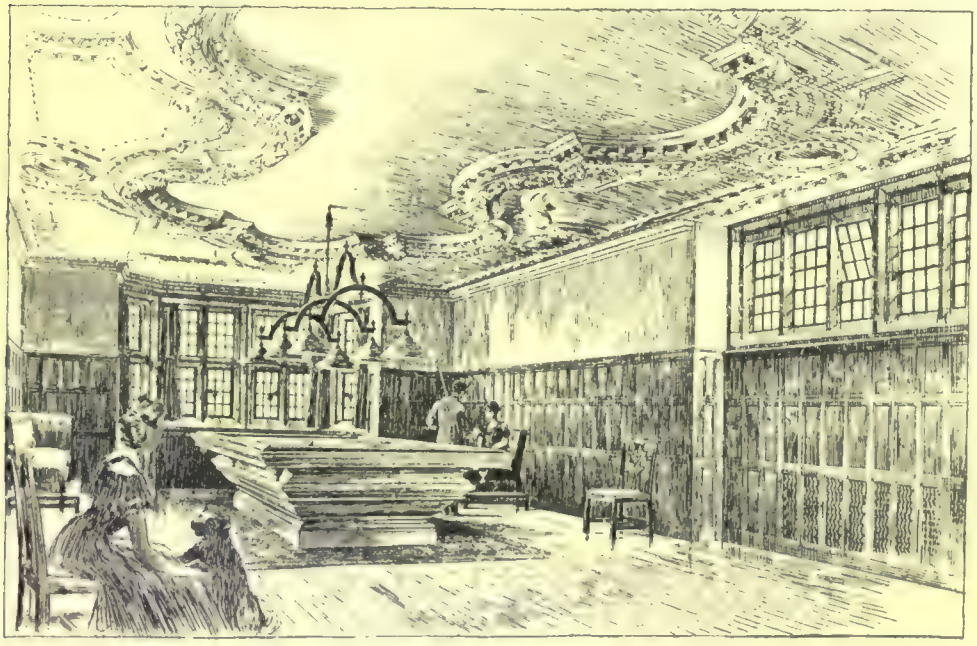


FIG. 278. MARSH COURT. BILLIARD ROOM

On the first floor a very striking effect is produced by the long gallery corridor, crossed at three points from the next floor above (see Fig. 283). A peculiarity of the first floor plan is that four of the bedroom suites are planned with unusual isolation. I illustrate one of the interesting rooms (see Fig. 284). It will be seen that the centre part of the ceiling is in the form of a semicircular vaulting, whilst the lower portions, which are flat, slightly slope upwards towards the vault. Some dainty plaster enrichment adds much to the interest. The mantel-piece is of unpolished walnut.

To describe the charms of the garden design at Marsh Court

FIG. 279. MARSH COURT. FROM MEADOWS BELOW

in detail would go far beyond the limits of my space. An unusually elaborate and cleverly-designed tank garden comes below the drawing-room windows, of which I give a sketch (Fig. 274). Here all sorts of delightful plants are to be found. On the lower terrace level is a pergola with red brick piers, and oak beams. Away to the back is a great lawn bordered by cut hedges with shaped recesses, in which are placed quaintly-designed oak seats, and the gradual softening out of the formal lines about the house towards the open country beyond is skilfully managed.

The original idea was to build this house with thatched roofs, which, with the white chalk walls, would unquestionably have produced a very pleasing effect on the site selected. But, notwithstanding the many able

essays which have been made in thatched house design, one cannot be surprised that we see comparatively little done in this direction, especially for large and costly buildings.

If I could put my readers in my place—if I could enable them to look at a house of this kind from a standpoint of equal sympathy with English domestic architecture, and of equally long experience in the study of it, I should feel sure of their enthusiastic appreciation of Marsh Court. To see the house itself, furnished as it is with taste and judgment, surrounded by garden ground of exceptional interest, and located in one of the most delightful of southern English landscapes, is to realize a series of pictures in architectural design which for quality are somewhat rare in modern building, even in England. It is probably safe to say that in no other land is country-house design to be found of similar excellence, which combines with that excellence a vital interest for the architect. To note the building from various points of view, to live in the house, as I have done, by the courteous hospitality of the owner, and enjoy the continually recurring interest of its pleasant apartments, its quaint corners, its picturesque peeps and charming vistas, along corridors, galleries, and suites of rooms—all this is necessary to estimate its measure of success, and to realize how a fresh personality (and a real one) may graft on to the traditional elements of old English architecture fresh life and force.

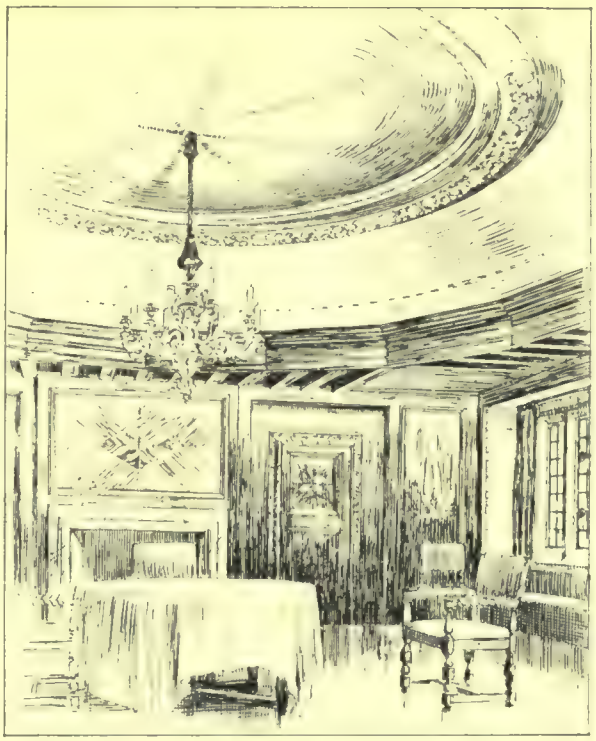


FIG. 280. MARSH COURT. DINING ROOM

Just as the work of Philip Webb, Eden Nesfield, and Norman

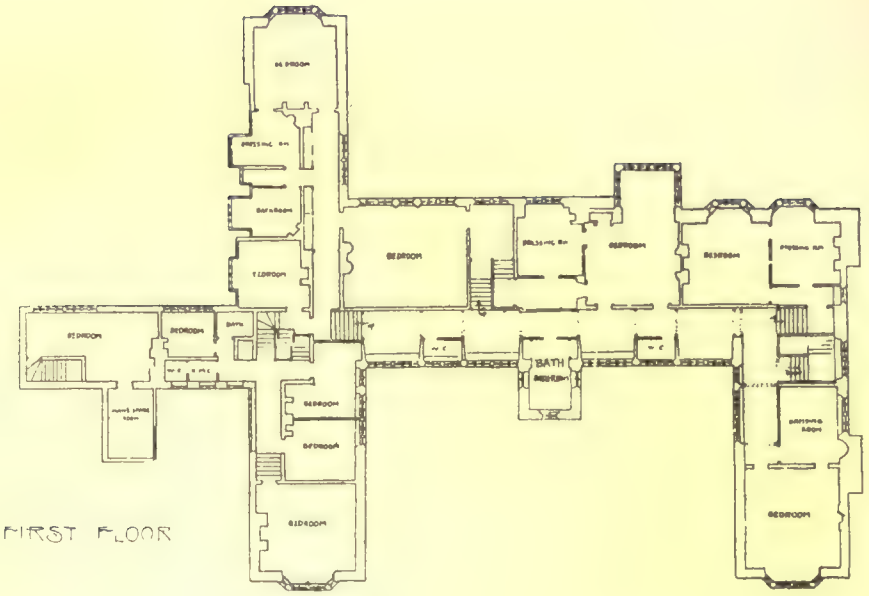


FIG. 281.

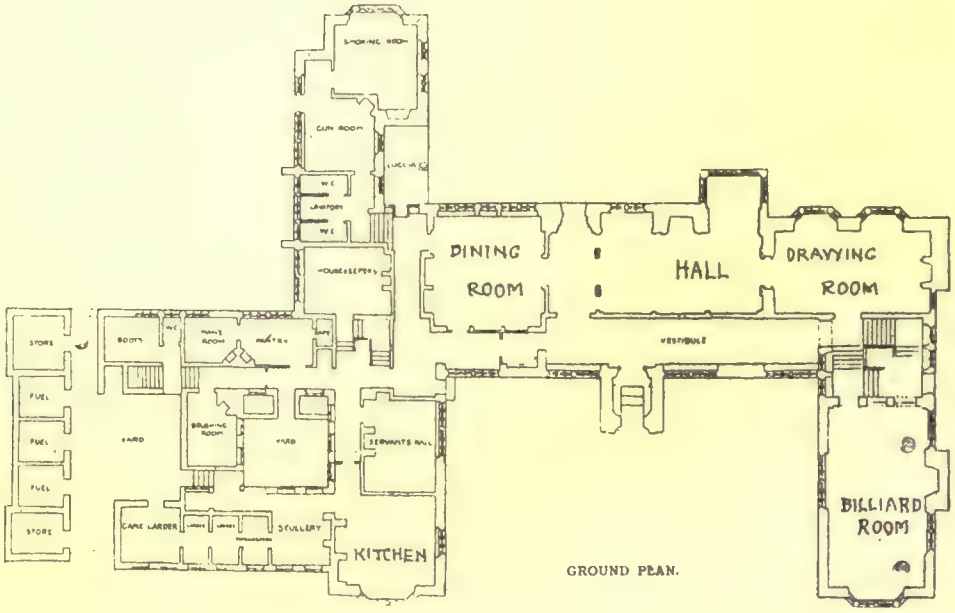


FIG. 282. MARSH COURT

Shaw has influenced and stirred the enthusiasm of others, so it is to be hoped that work like this will stimulate the thoughts of others.

After all, it is but seldom that one can say of a house that it is perfect at all points, and one might venture to criticize some things at Marsh Court: but when we find a house which is homelike, with something of stateliness and dignity—picturesque, with a feeling of sobriety and breadth: interesting without being fussy or trivial: comfortable without being cramped and inconvenient: and forcible with a large measure of refinement—we may reasonably claim that the modern domestic art of this country, as exemplified at Marsh Court, has made some definite advance.

FIG. 283. MARSH COURT. FIRST FLOOR GALLERY

The impression conveyed by this picturesque white house is not that of an uneasy striving after effect, but rather of a natural and generous expression from the plan form to the elevational result. In the first approach to the house, towards the entrance front, there is a dominant feeling of restful lines and quiet simplicity which is satisfying to one's sense of the architectural quality to be looked for in a good country home. There is an inviting look about the design of the long frontage, with its sheltering wings and central porch, suggestive of generous spaces and comfortable environment. Though in the other frontages there is more variety, we cannot but feel that the unity and breadth of the entrance front is the strong feature of the exterior, and especially pleasing in its expression of a country house design.

The situation is one of great natural charm, and as the immediate surroundings of the house gradually develop and mature, we may feel sure that the excellence of the whole result will become increasingly apparent. Round such a house as Marsh Court it is obvious that a

certain amount of formal gardening is called for, and must be designed with great care, to suit the lines of the building; but the softening effects of time and tone and the growth of plants and shrubs are important

FIG. 284. MARSH COURT. A BEDROOM

elements in the final effect, and I have often wished I could have the pleasure of a fourth visit to such a charming house as Marsh Court after a lapse of eighty or a hundred years!

SHAWFIELD

THE actual cost of building the houses in this book is not given, for various reasons. But the cost of any particular house is obviously only a partial guide to the erection of a similar one, as time, place, contractors, and quality of finish have all to be taken into account to obtain a parallel estimate of cost. It will, however, be of interest to give an example of a small house, erected in 1908 at a cost of £500, which illustrates with some accuracy what can be done within some twenty miles of London, and which it is probable could be done at even less cost, especially in the northern parts of England.

This cottage is an example of the adoption of the hall-parlour on a small scale, which goes so far towards making good sized rooms possible. It is obvious that a small parlour could easily be screened off

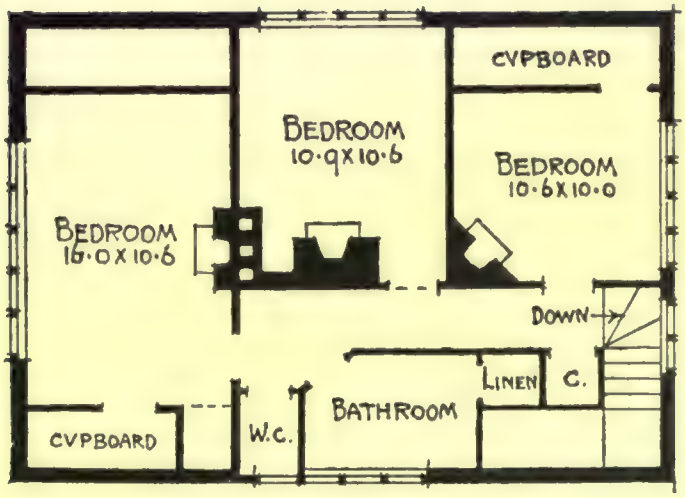


FIG. 285. UPPER FLOOR

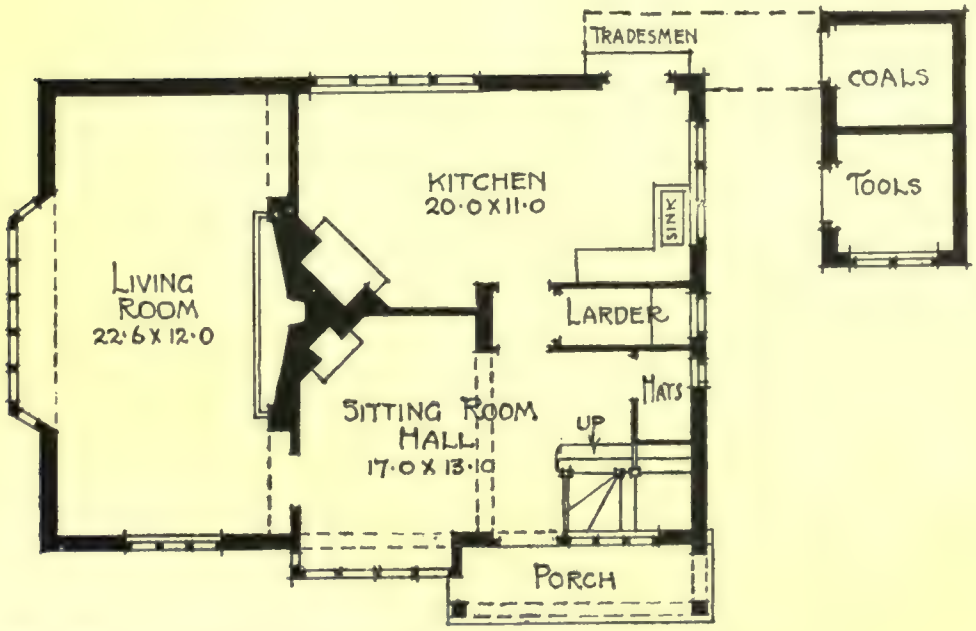


FIG. 286. SHAWFIELD (GROUND FLOOR): W. RUPERT DAVISON, ARCHITECT

from the entrance and stairs, and also that by some rearrangement the front door might be approached from the kitchen without going through any room space. But the planning of this cottage illustrates the willing acceptance of certain limitations, and if some of the space value of a larger house is obtained, it is recognized that something must be sacrificed for this result. Many people will gladly have a hall-parlour if they can get in addition all the other rooms they require, but in economic cottage building that sort of luxury is not to be obtained.

FIG. 287. SHAWFIELD

By dividing the whole ground area of this cottage into three parts the architect has provided three spaces: a living room 22 feet 6 inches by 12 feet 6 inches; a kitchen 20 feet by 11 feet; and a hall-parlour and staircase combined, 20 feet by 10 feet. Thus an agreeable impression of space is conveyed by the interior which the first appearance of the exterior hardly promises. It will be noticed that the scullery sink is placed at one end of the kitchen, well away from the fireside, and that thus a comfortable, airy kitchen is provided, which a very small cottage so seldom contains. It will be noted that a direct communication from the kitchen to the living room might easily be obtained by a little projecting bay.

It may be here mentioned that it is bad policy even in economical cottage building to cut down the expenditure on range, bath, and other

FIG. 288.

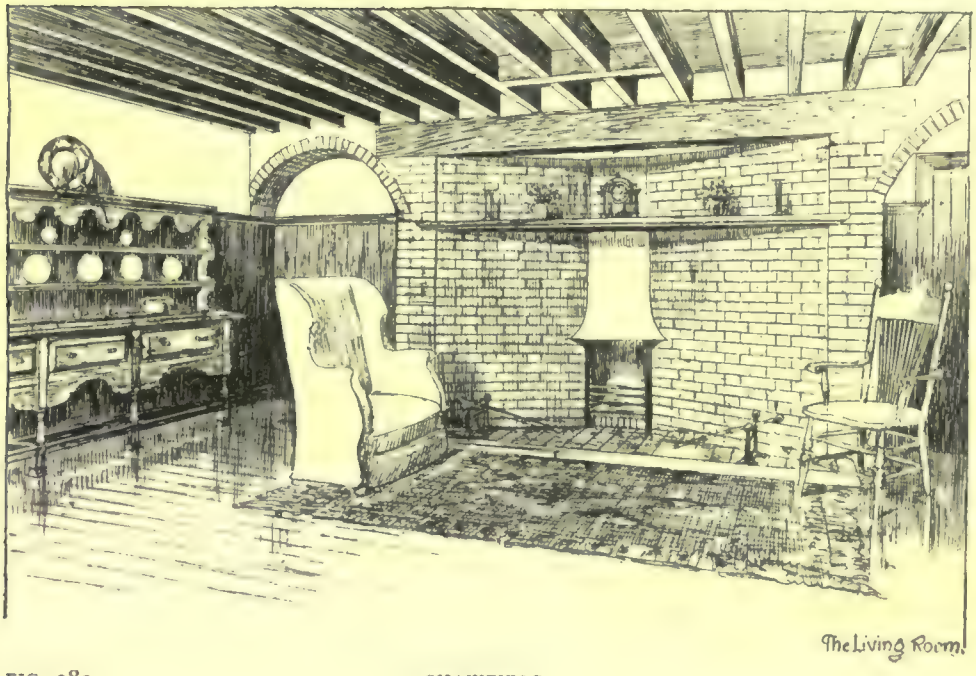


FIG. 289. SHAWFIELD

important fittings to the lowest point possible, both on account of comfort and durability.

It should be pointed out that a really good sized bathroom is obtained upstairs, besides two or three large cupboard spaces. By a very little extension this scheme might be improved in the upstairs portion, but downstairs the accommodation is all that could be reasonably desired in a small cottage.

The determination to reduce all cost of maintenance as far as possible is apparent both in the exterior and interior treatment. There are oak beams and posts to the porch, and as little woodwork as possible anywhere to require painting. It would have been better to have all the window frames of oak, as well as the doors. Inside, by covering the walls to a height of 5 feet 6 inches with boarding, which is stained a warm brown, and having a rough white plaster frieze over, with the joists and boarding between, giving a stained wood ceiling covering, all trouble with paper and paint is avoided. The floors are laid with pitch pine wood blocks, which are stained and beeswaxed. Thus the whole effect inside is one of brown and white against which purple or green or buff curtains have a good effect. Oriental rugs provide rich colouring for the floors if desired. The living room fireplace is built up entirely in red brick, in very flat splays, and an oak mantelshelf and oak beam over give a look of solid durability. Thickly leaded glazing gives strongly marked divisions of scale to the windows, and this extra heavy leading has an added value of protection against weather. Metal casements will probably be thought most desirable if the extra first cost can be entertained.

This cottage is well adapted to its site and aspect, the living rooms facing due south, and kitchen and larder due north.

The roof is covered with Ashford brown tiles. The walls are "roughcast," coloured buff, and the upper parts of gables covered with elm boarding.

The illustrations are from sketches made on the spot, and show the cottage as actually finished.

BRON-Y-GARTH

IN this country the verandah is not always, one might perhaps say very seldom, a complete success. It is a feature too often dragged into a design when it cannot be either of practical benefit or of artistic value. But in the house here illustrated a verandah comes naturally and well, both as an addition to the comfort and convenience of the home and as a pleasing feature in the general exterior effect. As the house stands, the verandah offers a complete protection from the north and east, so that it may be used with great frequency even in our uncertain climate. Moreover, the house commands most delightful views to the south-west and west, such as could hardly be surpassed even in Surrey, and the verandah makes a delightful outdoor lounge and sun-trap. It also creates a pleasant quality of light in the parlour. Bron-y-garth has been enlarged twice, and, as now completed, makes a comfortable and picturesque house. The main building is connected with the garage and stables by a long, low roof, under which is a great archway to the yard enclosure, with folding oak doors. Above the coachhouse and garage are coachman's living rooms. The long, low, open porch of the house is paved with red tiles, and has a white plaster coffered ceiling. The posts, lintels, and curved brackets are of oak. The first vestibule has a barrel vault ceiling in white plaster, and the walls are covered with white tiles, the three-light window at the end giving an agreeable note of colour, in tones of green, yellow, and sparkling white glass. The inner vestibule or hall is crossed by a semicircular arch, within which the posts and balustraded enclosure of the staircase give a picturesque effect. The walls are panelled in white up to the frieze.

The billiard-room is considerably above the minimum size for a billiard-table, and across the northern end a raised ingle-nook has been formed with splayed seats for three at each side. This ingle-nook is treated with the greatest breadth and simplicity possible, and forms a good note of colour for the room by its darkened oak panelling and the golden brown tiles to the hearth and surrounding the fireplace, which has a beaten copper hood and frame, and a great copper curb.

FIG. 290.

FIG. 291. BRON-Y-GARTH: W. RUPERT DAVISON, ARCHITECT

FIG. 292

FIG. 293. BRON-Y-GARTH

The tiles are built to a slightly curving plan, whilst the thick oak shelf forms a straight line. Semicircular-headed recesses above each side-seat are furnished with fine blue and white ware. The window-sills are finished with glazed Doulton tiles. The walls are panelled with flat square oak battens, and filled with Fabricona. The frieze (slightly sloping) and the ceiling are finished in white, relieved by flat battens following the length of the room. These of course repeat in the ceiling between the oak beams shown in Fig. 293. A specially-designed pendant was made for the room which has a rather low ceiling, governed by the part originally built. The fireplace strikingly illustrates the excellence of Messrs. Bratt Colbran's heaped-fire grate, of which it is the largest size. In the large bedroom over the billiard-room advantage has been taken of the addition of a western dormer window to form fixed wardrobes at each side of the arched window opening, which with a somewhat quaint corner fireplace, gives some architectural interest beyond that usually obtained in bedrooms.

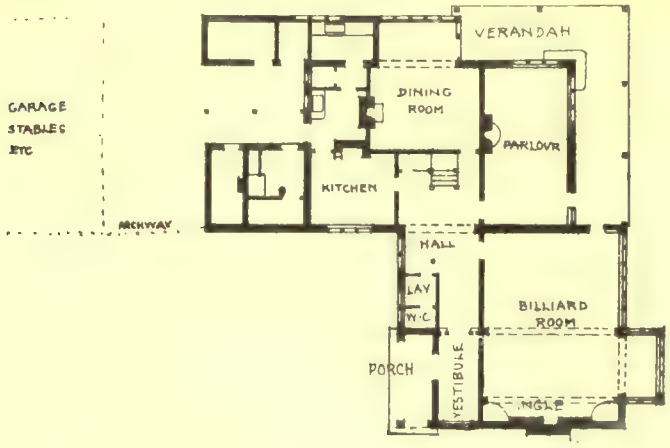


FIG. 294. BRON-Y-GARTH

The evolution of this house from a comparatively small cottage may be taken to show that the gradual development of a design often leads to a quality and interest which are more rarely obtained in a first essay. The design may also suggest that something is gained in approach to the old ideals when we determinedly eschew all that fuss and affectation so often displayed in the effort to obtain a fictitious interest, and build up a country home of moderate size with the utmost simplicity of form and detail.

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